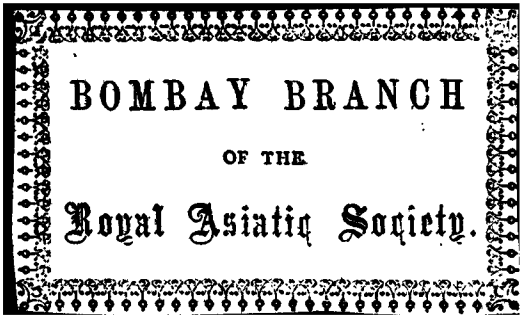


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A

LOTOS EATER IN CAPRI

BY

ALAN WALTERS

AUTHOR OF

'PALMS AND PEARLS; OR, SCENES IN CEYLON'

'O suol beato!
Ove sorridere
Volle il creato.'

56856

'Hæc ut potero explicabo . . . ut homunculus unus e multis probabilia conjectura sequens; ultra enim quo progrediar quam ut veri similia videam non habeo. Certa dicent ii, qui et perc[illegible]i ea posse dicunt, et se sapientes esse profitentur.'

CICERO, Tusc. i. 9





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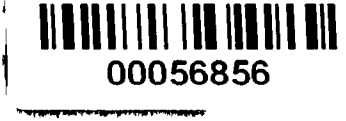
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARIE VAGNER AND THE AUTHOR

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1893

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Copies of this work
can be obtained at
Furchheim's Library,
Piazza dei Martiri, Naples.



FOREWORD

If this volume should, like Doctor Johnson's dish of cold sheep's head, fall under the condemnation of being but 'confused feeding,' it may possibly for that very reason commend itself to some fellow-vagrant, who has neither inclination for more learned labours nor space in his portmanteau for weightier tomes.

There is so little English literature on the subject of Capri that I make no apology for this outline of its history and antiquities, sketched among the scenes which I have attempted to describe. Closer topographical details will be found in my pocket 'Guide to Capri,' published by Furchheim, Naples.

I have done my best to verify my quotations, but in one or two instances have been compelled

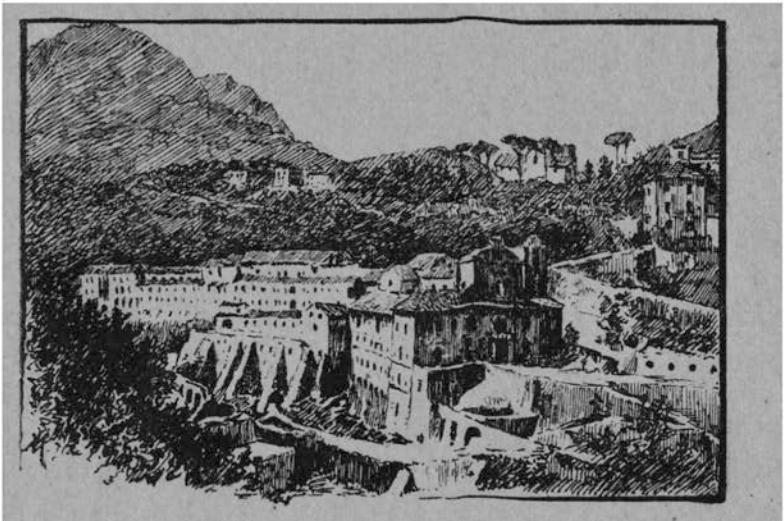
to content myself with a translation only of the original.

To Doctor Cerio and Colonel MacKowen I am under great obligation for materials placed at my disposal.

A. W.

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A LOTOS-EATER IN CAPRI

CHAPTER I.

IN MY GARDEN.

'We reached, borne downward with an easy helm,
Land of the flowery food, the Lotos-eating realm.'

THE first rays of the sun are kissing the tender emerald of the vine shoots, and tipping the olive boughs with a lustrous sheen; the snowy peach-blossoms float lazily earthwards and lose themselves in the sweet-scented tangle of wild-flowers at my feet, as I pace my little garden patch, and try to realize that nine short days ago I was shivering in the grip of a gray north-easter in Plymouth Sound. Now, as I look southwards in the soft haze of this young April dawn, through a medley of orange-gardens and roses and ferny walls and gray-green aloes and gnarled carouba

trees, my eyes rest lovingly on the soft outlines of the islets floating upon the fair Sicilian sea, where in days of old

> *'The shrill Sirens, couched among the flowers,*
> *Sang melodies that lured from the great deep*
> *The heedless mariner to their fatal bowers;*
> *Where round about them, piled in many a heap,*
> *Lay the bleached bones of mouldering men that sleep*
> *For ever, and the dead skins waste away.'*

But the

> *'Sweet death-songs of the singing sisters three'*

are heard no more; and as I listen to the silence around me, I fall to musing upon the world-old wonder of springtide, and the mighty mystery of resurrection, and the exceeding beatitude of the lotos-eater, whose love of work, set over against his love of idleness, is as Falstaff's penn'orth of bread to the sack with which he mingled it.

The island of Capri, '*un pezzo del cielo caduto in terra*,' is a mere rocky speck compared to such brilliant spots of splendour as the Antilles or Ceylon; but her beauty excels by reason of a subtle deepening charm undreamed of by the gadding traveller who, in his rushing gallop round the globe, can spare but an hour for a hasty lunch at the Marina, and a swift patronizing glance at the unique marvel of the Blue Grotto. Capri is a

joy for ever, not with the flashing loveliness of a queen, that strikes men dumb as she passes and is gone, but rather with the undistinguished glory of a face in whose features, lined and rugged, we have learned by a daily companionship to discern unfathomed depths of grace and tenderness.

> *'Who can light on as happy a shore,*
> *All the world o'er, all the world o'er?'*

If Capri be, as our American cousins would say, a one-horse place, that horse is Eclipse. Nowhere can a confirmed lotophagist, who, like the wife of the civic knight of Edmonton, is with frugal mind on pleasure bent, pitch his tent in a more congenial resting-place. Nowhere can he with sweeter contentment chew the cud of dreamy meditation, oblivious of the stress and strain of the 'social mill,' the big drum of Booth, and the irrepressible cackle of the compound householder; nowhere, with his feet set upon the threshold of Nirvâna, can he find a charm more potent to assuage

> *'The fever called living,*
> *That burns in the brain.'*

I will adapt the words of Goethe, who has said: 'Just as it is asserted that a man who has once seen a ghost is never afterwards seen to smile, so in the opposite sense it may be affirmed that a

man can never be utterly miserable who retains the recollection of Capri.'

At a distance of nineteen English miles from the noisy city, to which, as Ovid tells us,

> *'Sirenum dedit una suum memorabile nomen*
> *Parthenope,'*

Capri lies across the southern entrance of the Bay of Naples like a crouching lion. Jean Paul traced in its rocky profile a resemblance to the figure of a sphinx; the solid and sentimental Gregorovius compared it to 'an ancient sarcophagus whose sides are adorned with snaky-haired furies'; the fancy of others has likened it to the head and neck of a crocodile, or to a *caliga* or boot of a Spanish cavalier. A more accurate notion is conveyed by the German name 'Eber Insel,' or Boar Island, suggested by *kapros*, the Greek name of that animal. Looking at the facts that the Greek was here long before the Roman, that the language of Greece was the common speech of the islanders at the period of the imperial occupation, and that from very early historical times the highlands of Capri have been known under the distinctly Greek name of Anacapri, it seems difficult to avoid MacKowen's conclusion that we must distrust the popular Latin derivation which would make it the 'island of wild goats.' Strabo, writing in the

time of the Cæsars, calls it by its Greek designation; and seeing that the name of every other rock and town and island in the 'pulcherrimum sinum' was at that time of Greek origin, it is not to be believed that Capri alone should have had a Roman one.*

However this may be, the seagirt mass of rock, four miles and a half in length, and less than two miles wide, looks from the mainland like the just and proper continuation of the Punta di Campanella, the northern headland of the Salernian Gulf, from which it is separated by the Bocca, a strait only three miles in width.† The circuit, which at the present time is about nine miles, was for many years—at least, on paper—supposed to be forty, a mistake that had its origin in a misprint in successive editions of Pliny (iii. 6), whose 'xi.

* Marmocchi favours the popular derivation: 'Ecateo il più antico de' geografi la chiama Capriene, e pare che i Greci vi abbiano posto tal nome dal numero delle capre selvatiche che vi erano' (*Diz. di Geo. Univ.*). Martorelli thinks that the name is from the Phœnician word *Capraim*, meaning 'two towns.' The plural form Capreæ used by ancient writers may be compared with Athenæ, Mycenæ, Thebæ, Cumæ, etc. An inconclusive note on the subject will be found in Quaranta (p. 7), who points out that in Ptolemy alone the single form *Caprea* is met with, to which I may add the 'Capriene' of Stephanus Byzantinus.

† The διάπλους βραχὺς of Strabo.

M. passuum' was turned into 'xl.' To bring present measurements into agreement with his, we must suppose considerable encroachments of the sea during the last eighteen centuries.

That the island was once part of the Surrentine peninsula is not out of harmony with the requirements of geology and with the character of the neighbouring coast. From its shores we look out upon the isles of Ischia and Procida, both of which may have been severed from the mainland by the same convulsion of nature that insulated Capri.* Such an idea is confirmed by the incontrovertible fact that in very early times Vesuvius had been in active eruption.

Strabo (v. 4) says of Mount Vesuvius in his day that it 'is covered with beautiful meadows except on the top, which is mostly level, but quite sterile, with an appearance of ashes, showing rugged rocks of sooty consistency and colour, as if they had been burned with fire. From which one might conclude that the mountain had once burned, and possessed fiery abysses, and had become extinguished when the material was spent.'

Girt in almost its entire circumference by ram-

* Strabo (*Geog.* I.) says: 'Some think that Lesbos was torn from Ida as Prochyta and Pithecusa were from Misenum, and Capreæ from Athenæum (*i.e.*, Punta Campanella).'

parts of precipitous cliffs varying from two hundred to two thousand feet in height, and riven by innumerable gorges plunging sheer down into the sea, Capri is accessible only at a few points. Its geological formation consists for the most part of limestone strata from the tertiary period, covered in many places by a deposit of volcanic cinders and pozzolana underlying the surface soil.* A few years ago light was thrown upon these evident tokens of volcanic action by the discovery of some human remains at a depth of eight or ten feet, beneath which at a farther depth of twenty-five feet was found a deep cinder deposit, with carbonized trunks and branches of trees embedded. It cannot be doubted that the cinders were originally deposited in a red-hot state, inasmuch as the trees were still standing in a vertical position, with their roots perforating the soil and their boughs spreading laterally outwards. But how cinders from an eruption either at Vesuvius or in Ischia could ever have reached Capri hot enough to

* Pozzolana (the 'pulvis puteolanus' of Vitruvius) is a ferruginous ash, known locally as *tarras*, and is used in England in the making of fine mortar and cement. Tufa, known in England as 'Naples stone,' is a soft stone easily worked with a tomahawk, and consisting of pumice, ashes and burnt matter. It resembles freestone in colour, varying from a gray-green to a yellow.

produce carbonization is so hard a nut to crack that I am inclined to take refuge in the plausible suggestion of Colonel MacKowen, who supposes that they were transported neither from the mainland nor from Epomeo (which in 1302 was responsible for the devastation of Ischia), but from the mouth of the vast crater now covered by the placid waters of the Bay of Naples, to which the name Cratere is still frequently given.

The interior of Capri is for the most part rocky and broken, and one third of its surface utterly sterile. Although the many visible remains of its former glories give a certain forlorn look to the island, its scenery is no less attractive, its climate no less charming, than when the poet Statius invited his wife to come and share with him the delightful retirement of its shores :

> *'Quas et mollis hiems et frigida temperat æstus,*
> *Quas mitelle fretum torpentibus alluit undis.'*

The only level tracts of any extent are the 'saddle' in the centre near the town of Capri, the Unghia Marina near the Certosa, a grassy plain down at Aiano near the ruined 'Palazzo a mare,' and a fertile stretch of ground round Anacapri, to which, until twenty years ago, the only access lay along a steep rocky stairway of many hundred steps, hewn out of the face of the mountain ridge that runs across

the island from north to south. That the stairway was the work of men who inhabited Capri before the time of the Cæsars seems to be hinted at by Strabo, who says: 'Formerly there were two towns in Capreæ; now, however, there is but one'—a statement that suggests an amalgamation which was only possible on the supposition of a means of communication between the two. The steps, which can be followed now only in isolated portions, have fallen into disuse by the construction of the fine carriage-road that starts from the Marina and ends after many windings just beyond the village of Anacapri, nine hundred feet above the sea.

The dividing line by which the masterful hand of Nature has emphatically severed highland from lowland has not been without its effects on the history and racial characteristics of the islanders, amongst whom, divided into the hostile camps of the Capriotes and Anacapriotes, there has existed from time immemorial a heartsome feud.* In 1496 the highlandmen complained bitterly to Frederic, the last of the Aragonese sovereigns, of the wrongs inflicted on them by the men of Capri,

* From economical motives no Italian census was taken in 1891; the last numbering showed the population to be: Capri 2,827, Anacapri 2,021.

and were successful in obtaining the establishment of a separate commune. Half a century later they renewed their complaints to Charles V., saying that the lowlanders used to burn their boats and crops, and drive them from the fishing of the *aguglia*, or garfish. Capaccio, writing in 1607, tells us that 'the people of Capri and Anacapri are enemies, doing out of spite all the damage they can to one another.' At the end of the last century the Austrian Hadrawa, who made many excavations in the island, was much impressed by the hatred still existing, and by meeting with old people up in Anacapri who had never been down to Capri. The completion of the carriage-road in 1874 marked an era in the life of the islanders, hundreds of whom, though living but three miles from the nearest mainland, had up to that time never seen a horse. That there is no excessive cordiality at the present day is shown by an amusing instance in which witness was borne by a native of Capri against his own father. 'These people of Anacapri,' he said, 'are born thieves and liars; they are always quarrelling with one another and going to law. They cannot help it—the very air of Anacapri makes them thieves, whether they wish to be or not. You never see one of them without a sack on his

shoulder, to hide in it what he has stolen. Now, there is my own father: he was born in Anacapri, and can never go down to my boathouse without stealing a rope, or a bolt, or something, which he can sell for a few *soldi*, and then goes off and buys rum with it. He cannot help it, he was born in such an atmosphere as Anacapri, and I cannot blame him. I never let him carry a sack, because I know he will be up to his old tricks, and —who knows?—he might be arrested for stealing and sent to gaol. Every time I hear of his going into my boathouse I examine his pockets, and always find something which can be easily carried off. There is no need of his stealing, because we children give him everything he can want.' I am indebted for this naïve unveiling of a family skeleton to Colonel MacKowen, who goes on to remark that, as a matter of course, the people of Anacapri consider the air of Capri as deleterious to all moral principle; with a scornful designation of their neighbours as 'Saraceni,' they wonder how an honest stranger can remain any length of time among such corrupted and evil specimens of humanity. Probably, as the same writer suggests, the ill-feeling springs from a hate of races. The Anacapriote is almost a pure Greek; blue eyes and fair hair are predominant, and he

delights in a broad sonorous sounding of his vowels. The Capriote, on the other hand, is a mixture of Greek, Latin, Arabic, Turkish, Spanish, French, English, and Irish, hardly to be wondered at when we remember that his island home has lain for ages in the track of contending races and civilizations.

In no respect are the changes which are gradually transforming the island more evident than in the almost total disappearance of the picturesque feminine costumes. It is but seldom now that one sees the velvet sleeveless *corsage* laced up the front and trimmed with gold braid; the white *chemisette* with wide sleeves fastened on the throat and arm by little silver balls; the short, thickly-gathered skirts; the gold or coral necklace and large round earrings of rough pearls, often with an emerald in the centre. The hair, which is usually very luxuriant and neatly kept, is commonly seen plaited with a silver pin stuck through the chignon. In summer the costume used to be varied by a blue corset bodice and a white-sleeved *chemisette* cut low in the neck; but these are sights reserved in these degenerate days for the highest *festas*, when the female section of the community turns out in all its bravery.

Great is the glory of a Capriote maiden's bridal

raiment, and lavish her trousseau to an extent that would astonish northern dames. Although the inquiry trenches on delicate ground, I am in a position to state that a hundred *chemisettes*, three dozen pairs of stockings, three or four dozen plain and a dozen silk handkerchiefs, eight or ten petticoats, fifty bed-sheets, and five-and-twenty lace-edged pillow-cases, are thought nothing out of the way as part of the outfit of an ordinary *contadina*. While on the subject of marriage, I may mention that it is not *en règle* for the parents of a bride to attend the wedding ceremony in church; it is considered that they best perform their duty by remaining at home, where, in theory at least, they sit and weep for the departure of their daughter from among her people. The progress of the bridal feast is accentuated at intervals by the throwing of very hard *confetti* among the guests, a proceeding that has been known before now to blossom into something very like a free fight. Though wine and food are cheap in Capri, money is scarce, and it is no uncommon thing for a man, say a sailor, after having saved a nice little sum for his married life, to squander every *soldo* of it upon his wedding festivities. And the wine (especially that which, after a barbarous custom, has been violently fermented for the second

time with a bunch of black grapes specially dried to the consistency of raisins)—if it be not dear, neither is it heady; at the same time, quantity tells, and the semi-drunken fun waxes fast and furious, the bridegroom seeking to drown the future in copious floods of *rosso* or *bianco*, while his fellow-sufferer sits motionless as a wooden doll till the hour comes for her to be carried off to her new home, which she does not leave for a week. If venturesome enough to take a walk abroad after dark during that period, she must not be hurt if staid folk call her a *faccia tosta*, or 'bold face.'

A Capriote girl is from early years consumed by a threefold ambition: to possess a pair of boots, to wear a hat, and to marry (as some have done) an English milord. As a rule she is not conspicuous for truthfulness, though, perhaps, no worse in this respect than some nearer home who ought to know better. I have questioned some of the natives as to their ideas of honesty, and I am inclined to think that the morality of many of them is on a sliding scale. '*Roba da mangiare non si porta a confessione?*' (Is it necessary to divulge a theft of food in the confessional?) I have asked, and after a good deal of fencing have reached the conclusion that if my landlady comes into my

room and appropriates a plum it is *niente* (nothing); but if she goes of *malice prepense* into the *cantina*, or cellar, and helps herself to a bottle of my wine, it would, or at any rate ought to, lie heavy on her conscience, a distinction which puts her pretty much on the level of the rest of mankind, and compares not unfavourably with the conscientious scruples of the average British trader.

As a Chinaman has his Tat and the Australian his Bun-yip, so does the Capriote stand in awe of certain baleful creatures from whose influence he shrinks with dread. There is an uncanny organism described to me as a headless calf that still is said to haunt the island; at least, it did so a very few years ago, when a man obstinately refused to bring a message down from Anacapri after dark without a companion. Superstitions of a lighter kind are neither more nor less common than among other folk. A lizard in the house brings good luck, the killing of a snake misfortune; if a rat be slain in the cowhouse, the demise of the family cow is certain to follow quickly. A sneeze calls forth a benedictory ejaculation; the *mal occhio*, or evil eye, is dreaded as earnestly as in all other parts of Italy, and charms of all kinds are worn to avert its effects. On entering a house for

the first time, or on going into a cellar, San Martino is invoked, because his saintship '*fa crescere il vino*' (makes the wine increase)—a belief which is explained by the following tradition. There was once a poor Capriote woman who, when rent day came round, was terribly out of spirits because she had only a barrel of wine wherewith to pay, and in her distress she exclaimed, 'Oh, that my *barile* would last for ever, that so I might sell it always!' Then she began to draw out her little store into smaller vessels, and found to her amazement that the wine did not diminish. The faster it flowed the more there seemed to be to flow, and, greatly wondering, she made known the extraordinary circumstance to her neighbours, who went into her cellar and determined to get to the bottom of the matter. It looked very much like killing the goose with the golden eggs; but they set to work, digging in the earth under the barrel, and soon came to the body of a man, out of whose mouth was growing a lily, from the cup of which good red wine flowed in a constant stream. They ascertained that it was none other than the 'mortal coil' of one Giovanni di Martino, who was then and there, with the assistance, I presume, of the clergy, promoted to full canonical honours under the style and title of San Martino, and is to this

day invoked by the Capresi in all their vinous transactions. I have not been able to learn what compensation was made to the poor woman for the loss of her perennial store.

Hadrawa, writing a century ago, speaks of the Capriotes as men who 'though they have no knowledge of the laws nor the art of eloquence'—it is evident that the learned antiquary never listened to an *appiccio*, or quarrel, between a couple of Capriote women—'they possess a wonderful ability in hiding their real pretensions, until an opportunity presents itself, and then, when least expected, they find an excuse for eluding their obligations.' On the other hand, he has nothing but praise for the Anacapriotes. For my own part, I have found them honest and trustworthy—up to a certain point. The Capriote charioteer, or fisherman, knows the value of money; but where is the Saxon or Celt who can throw a stone at him on that account? Granted that it is well to be particular over any bargains you make with him, in what country is it otherwise? I have travelled far and wide over the surface of this humming globe, and I should find it difficult to put my finger on any land wherein the 'doing' of one's neighbour is not elevated into an art. If one is ruffled just a little at first by the incessant

Dat' un sol' (Give a halfpenny) from the lips of every urchin one meets, or by the whining '*Qual co, per l'amor' de' Madre!*' from the old fraud squatting under the hedge, I can only state my conviction that a prolonged course of the sweet air of Capri will tend to soothe the nerves and make one indifferent to such disturbances; and a little reflection will teach that what seems like sheer insistent greed is but the inevitable outcome of centuries of poverty and ignorance.

The good qualities of the Capriote, who is rich in nothing but offspring, outnumber the bad ones a hundredfold. He may be slightly avaricious and unable to rise superior to the temptation of passing off a worthless coin upon the unwary stranger, but he is courteous and hardworking, a lover of his home, and, notwithstanding a volcanic mannerism, is eminently disposed to peaceful pursuits. Murder and suicide are unknown. You have but to look at the happy, unlined faces of the splendidly healthy women, who flit about the piazza in their clattering *soccolas*, or stalk barefooted under their burdens along the narrow, rock-paved lanes, to know that they are temperate and abstemious, and far removed from the rampant vices of a highly-civilized life. To say that a Capriote enjoys a mild gamble is but to say that

he is human and of a southern race. The *lotta*, or weekly State lottery, has its attractions, and is a source of steady income to the Government.* Of the hundred numbers, ninety only are open to the public, the State reserving to itself the last ten. In the mind of every Italian each number is associated with a certain idea of good or bad luck; and for his guidance in buying a five-franc ticket he has all sorts of queer cabalistic traditions. No. 48, for instance, is associated with the idea of 'the dead who speaks'; while No. 90 has to do with the notion of fear, and so on. When any unwonted incident comes under a man's cognizance he sees in it a guide to a winning number in the lottery.

In former years not a few of the men used to be absent during a great part of the year as sailors or coral-fishers on the Sardinian and African coasts, and upon their wives and daughters fell most of the heavy work at home. But times have changed, and it is not so now, although the women, in accordance with Oriental ideas, still take more than their

* As a Roman wag said long ago by the lips of the pungent Pasquino:

'*Il giuco in complesso*
E un vizio bestiale,
Ma il lotto in se stesso
Ha non che di morale.'

share of toil. It is simply marvellous to see what they can do. A load of sixty or seventy kilogrammes is carried on the head, as if it were a bundle of feathers, for a mile or more up the roughest paths. A couple of strapping wenches will carry a pianoforte up from the Marina to Capri, hardly resting by the way; and the weights of stone to which even young girls are equal make one's head ache to look at them. It has been said that there is not a house in Capri which has not been carried to its present site on the heads of women—an evidence not only of the strength of their cervical vertebræ, but of an endurance all the more remarkable when we know that their common food is bread and broth, macaroni, beans and green stuff, now and then a bit of fish, and a mouthful of meat on the three or four great *festas* in the year; to which is sometimes added a condiment of semolina dough baked with garlic, called *pizza*, or snails in garlic and oil. Little do they know of 'Voit's standard,' with its 118 grams of protein and its 3,055 calories of energy. There is a good deal of difference between the daily diet of a Capriote and that of a Massachusetts brickmaker, commonly said to be the largest consumer of animal food in the world.

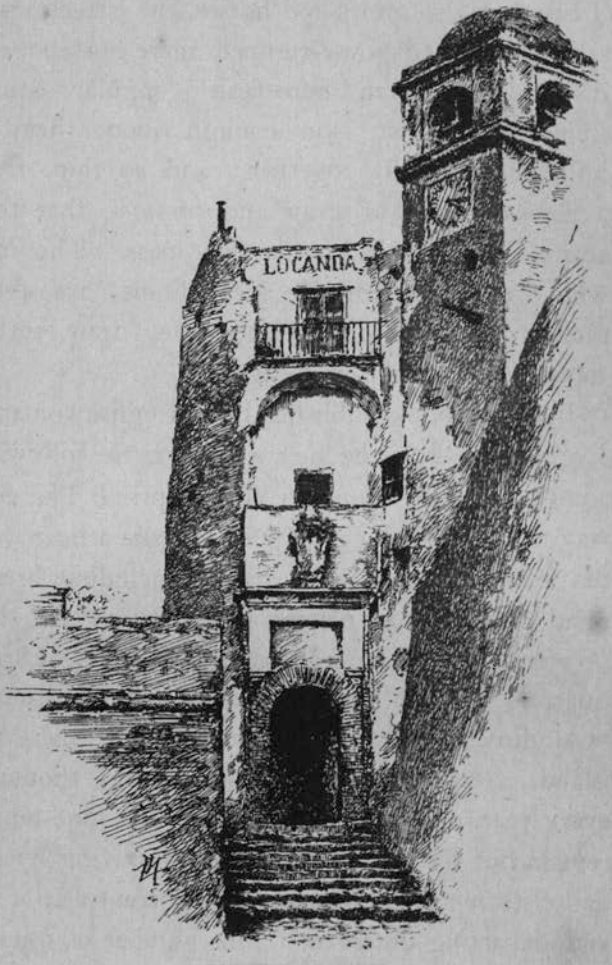
As for the children, they must be known to be

appreciated. It is generally admitted that a juvenile American is not backward in coming forward; but a genuine Capriote *ragazzo* can give Master Ulysses Tripper, of New York city, five years' start and beat him easily. He can hop before he can walk, and act before he can talk, and at seven years of age will swagger up to you with his hands in a couple of make-believe pockets, and offer, with a confidential '*Signur*', *me very good guide!*' to conduct you to the top of Monte Solaro.

The dialect spoken is harsh and uncouth in comparison with pure Italian, and not easily comprehended by one who has made his acquaintance with that mellifluous tongue only through the fascinating pages of Ollendorf. As witness the following: '*Facciamo presto per venire sù, perchè ho da scandere subito per portare delle pietre,*' is transformed by a Capriote maiden, anxious to increase her daily wage as a stone-carrier, into, '*Fammo priest' pe venire 'n copp, ca io aggio a calà subbete a portar le pietre.*' Instead of the polite '*Buon giorno! come sta Ella?*' the Capriote snaps out, '*F'oggi?*' Anglicè, 'Do-day?' His speech is laden with a certain Teutonic heaviness, turning *posso* into *bosso*, *monte* into *monde*, *c* into *g*, *b* into *v*, and so on; so that, in my initial ignorance of the 'Crap' tongue, what I under-

stood to be the laudable virtues of the female cousin (*cugina*) of my landlady, I discovered to my chagrin were but the transcendental excellencies of the appointments of her kitchen (*cucina*). In addition to a general mixing up of the alphabet, they invariably deprive their words of the legitimate terminations, and, from a philological point of view, may be said to live wholly upon roots.

Turning for a moment from man to beast, the natural history of Capri may be dismissed in a very few lines. The wolves and boars and foxes and polecats and rabbits and snakes, which once abounded, have disappeared; and, with the exception of a few woodcock in the winter, and the quails, which in spring and autumn come in large numbers, there is no game of any kind. Song birds and butterflies are by no means numerous; and were it not for an occasional hawk or sea-bird, a few harmless black snakes, and the handsome green lizards which dart about in legions, there would be little 'wild' life of any kind. A few goats and cows are penned here and there, and donkeys (quite tame, and rejoicing in such names as *mezza notte* and *grott' azzur'*) may be had with any number of legs up to four, and with saddles of shameless peakiness and undisguised nodosity.



GATEWAY AT CAPRI.

To face p. 23.

There are also mules and horses, the latter mostly cow-hocked and goose-rumped, mere horsebone as distinguished from horseflesh — angular equine frames with just skin enough about them to hold the anatomy together; and so thin, from a persistent diet of straw and *carouba*, that they scarcely cast a shadow as they pass. The men who drive them (mostly Neapolitans) are of the race of Nimshi; the vehicles they draw, rattle-traps in every stage of decay.

In a little book published by an Englishwoman at Leghorn in 1825, the authoress gives the following advice to those about to visit Capri: 'The best way to accomplish the trip is to take a boat with ten rowers, and a cold dinner, including bread, salad, fruit, plates, glasses, forks, knives, etc., but no wine.' Times have changed since then. Three-quarters of the population get their living directly or indirectly from the strangers who visit the island, to the number of some thirty thousand every year, of whom, however, at least nine-tenths remain but for two or three hours, arriving by the daily steamer from Naples and Sorrento at noon and departing at three. The number of foreign residents is exceedingly small, and it is but seldom that all the hotels are full. Pension may be had at six francs a day, including excellent island wine,

and comfortable lodgings may be found on very reasonable terms.

Among the things that strike one on landing in Capri for the first time is the different type in the faces and forms of the islanders as contrasted with that on the opposite shores of Campania. This is chiefly noticeable in the case of the women, who, especially at Anacapri, are sometimes comely enough. But the lowland women have been overpraised. I had heard so much of their lithe and graceful figures, their pure Grecian profiles, their magnificent heads, etc., that I was sorely disenchanted when I first met a long string of *contadinas*, in whom the most conspicuous 'points' were square shoulders, short broad backs *à la Gillray*, thick waists (like eternity, without beginning or end), massive lumbar regions, and a gait more like that of a grenadier than a goddess. But their hands and feet are frequently small and delicate, their faces wear a look suggestive of a light heart within, and there is a certain erect independence and springiness of carriage which at once attracts the eye. The marvel is, considering the work they do, not that they should look muscular and large-limbed, but that they should preserve the outer semblance of womankind at all. It is one thing to bear a pitcher to

and from a well *à la Rebekah;* it is another to carry day after day a dead hundredweight of stone on the top of the head. I am afraid that the artists who frequent Capri, knowing that *l'art embellit la nature*, have as little conscience as their brothers of the brush elsewhere, in that they are greatly given to idealism. Whence it comes about that on the walls of the Salon or of Burlington House the hard black eyes of 'A Capriote Girl' shine soft as those of a gazelle, the short broad nose is elongated, the long upper lip abbreviated, the square chin delicately rounded. As one sees them in live flesh and blood, not a few have the black hair and full nose of a Saracen, or the low wide forehead of a Greek, or the panther-like eyes and mouth of a true Latin; while here and there, as I take my walks abroad, I come suddenly upon a pair of blue or gray eyes shaded by a soft fringe of light-brown hair, upon the origin of which a ray of light is perhaps thrown by the following anecdote:

Not a hundred years ago an officer was sitting next an Irishwoman at a table d'hôte in Capri, when the conversation turned upon certain insular ethnological varieties, which had so puzzled the gallant gentleman that he ventured to ask his neighbour if she knew of any reason which might

account for them. The lady, with a little mischievous laugh after her kind, made answer:

'Shure, Colonel, now, and don't ye know?'

'Indeed, madam, I am at a loss, though I have given considerable attention to such subjects in many different parts of the world.'

'Ah, then, Colonel dear'—dropping her voice to a whisper—'we are ould married people, d'ye see, so you will think nothing of it if I just remind ye that a regiment of boys from ould Ireland was quartered here at the other end of the century.'

A wider field of conjecture is opened up in the attempt to identify Capri with the isle of the Sirens, mentioned in the Homeric poems as sighted by Ulysses.* To this hour the little jutting rock at the Marina, on the south side, is called by the natives La Sirena, a fact from which at least may be deduced the existence of a venerable myth to which I shall refer again. That Capri had of old its age of stone and its dwellers in caves is proved by the excavations of Dr. Cerio in the Grotta dell' Arco, who brought to light vessels

* Ovid sings of the hero sailing north:

'Inde legit Capreas promontoriumque Minervæ,
Et Surrentino generosos palmite colles,
Herculeamque urbem, Stabiasque, et in otia natam
Parthenopen, et ab hac Cumææ templa Sibyllæ.'

Met., xv. 709.

of pottery, the possible handiwork of Phœnicians, who may have followed the cave-dwellers, and in their turn have been superseded by Greeks. Some have thought that the Greeks came first. However that may be, it is certain that the men who founded maritime colonies beyond the Pillars of Hercules and at Adria (now high and dry at a distance of nearly twenty miles from the sea) were just the men to seize upon an island peopled by a few half-savages, and lying most conveniently for their own enterprises.*

Although, therefore, in the ebb and flow of centuries not a few muddy rivulets have mingled with the pure stream of the Capriotes' ancient lineage, I have learned to look with some respect on them as upon men whose sires were soldiers under the walls of Troy. Tacitus tells us† of the Teleboi, who many centuries before the Christian era sailed over the Sicilian sea; men whose home was in the Echinades, a little group of bare rocks

* Hamel (*Tabulæ Chron. Sac.*) arrives at the conclusion that the Greeks landed in Capri in the sixth century B.C. Martorelli puts them after the Phœnicians: 'Ante Teleboos etiam Phenices hanc insulam adunasse. Itaque cum Phenices binas urbes parvas eâ in insulâ vel repererint vel condiderint unam scilicet in supernâ et altiori parte, alteram in inferiori.'—*De Reg. Thec. Cal.*, 12.

† 'Capreas Telebois habitatas fama tradit.'—*Ann.*, iv. 67

off the Acarnanian coast at the mouth of the muddy Achelous; hard by the Taphian isles, the modern Meganisi, realm of that Mentes who declared himself

> *'Mentes, the son of brave Anchialus,*
> *And sea-famed Taphos is my regal right':*

Mentes, whose counterfeit presentment Athene took upon herself when from the council-hall of the gods she wended her way to Ithaca, that she might 'sting with sterner virtue' the heart of Telemachus:

> *'She waiting as a guest-friend at the door,*
> *Of Mentes, Taphian chief, the likeness bore.'*

Herodotus has it that in his day one half of these Echinades had already been converted into continent by the alluvial deposits of the river; and what the dwellers upon them were like we may gather from Homer, who sings of a maiden that fell a prey to their marauding ways:

> *'Once Taphian pirates, as I wended home,*
> *Found me afield, and o'er the rolling sea*
> *Led to this mansion of my lord.'*

The mother wit of the Greek had given the rocks their names, seeing in the sharp ridges of their bristling crags the same prickly outlines of the echinus or sea-urchin which to this day make them known as the Oxiës or 'sharp islands' to the

gatherers of sponge and coral—men who know nothing of modern life beyond the thin far-off swathe of ship's smoke that now and again lies over the western horizon; men who have been little moved by the roll and roar of things mundane since the day when Meges, son of Phyleus, led forty ships to Troy from 'Dulichium and the sacred isles of Echinæ situated beyond the sea opposite Elis.' This, added to the name of Telon their king,* is all that I have been able to fish up out of the past about the dwellers in my lotos-garden, which after a sleep of many centuries awoke suddenly to more stirring times in the days of imperial Rome.†

* Silius Italicus (vii. 50) calls Capri 'Antiqui saxosa Telonis insula.' Virgil (Æn., vii. 732) sings thus of him and his discontented son:

> *Œbale, quem generasse Telon Sebethide nympha*
> *Fertur, Teleboum Capreas cum regna teneret,*
> *Jam senior; patriis sed non et filius arvis*
> *Contentus late jam tum ditione premebat*
> *Sarrastis populos,' etc.*

The date of the departure of the Teleboi is unknown. It is certain that they did much for the island both in the way of agriculture and public works.

† When the Byzantine empire was parcelled out, the south of Italy had the name of Sikelia, from the Siceli, its earliest inhabitants, mentioned by Thucydides and Timæus. Hence the origin of the name 'Two Sicilies,' which has for many years been an unmeaning one.

CHAPTER II.

CÆSAR IN CAPRI.

'*Insula est ad rem quidem nullam utilis: nomen adhuc hodie retinens propterea quod ibi habitavit Tiberius.*'

DION CASSIUS, lib. liii.

Insula parva quidem, quondam tamen æmula Romæ,
Cæsaribusque viris hospita digna fuit.'

'*Passan vostri trionfe e vostre pompe;*
Passan le signorie passano i regni,
Cose 'l tempo trionfa i nomi e 'l mondo.'

THE island of Capri formed for many centuries a portion of the Greco-Italian republic, after whose institutions, laws, and religion its own were fashioned. As time went on, the neighbouring isle of Ischia or Pithecusa slipped from the grasp of Naples and came under the power of Rome, in which it remained until it was exchanged for Capri by the Emperor Augustus after the battle of Actium. Thus the (so-called) island of

Circe returned to her Neapolitan allegiance, and Capri became Roman.

It may be said of Capri that she awoke and found herself famous on the day when the foot of Caius Octavius Augustus, son of the Velletri money-lender, first touched her soil. So moved was the imperial visitor by an auspicious and timely omen, that during the remaining years of his life he paid several short visits, and bestowed many signal marks of his favour upon the island folk. His biographer records that as he stepped ashore the leafless boughs of a decaying ilex, which hung drooping to the earth, instantly recovered themselves and took a new lease of life. It was the keen satisfaction with which the superstitious Emperor took to heart this spontaneous welcome on the part of the vegetable kingdom that no doubt brought about the subsequent adornment of the island at his hands. Like others of his race and lineage, Augustus was never happier than when engaged in building. The hands that had reared in Rome many a temple and portico and basilica were not long idle in Capri. He set to work on things of use and beauty in the building of villas, the cutting of roads, the rearing of aqueducts, and the revival of the local Isthmian games on the little strip of level land at Aiano,

across which now lies the path to the 'Palazzo-a-mare,' near the Villa Haan. With a flash of humour he called a certain place in the island Apragopolis, or 'Far-niente town,'* because of the sleepy ways of its people, who in truth seem to have fattened on the bread of idleness, and to have busied themselves with little beyond the assiduous cultivation of the lotos. He employed as chief architect or engineer one Masgabas, an African,† whom in jest he was wont to call the 'founder' of the island; and amid weightier occupations amused himself with fishing—'animi laxandi causa'—and with the collection of a number of bones of extinct species of animals, thus fairly earning the distinction of being the proprietor of the first palæontological antediluvian museum on record.

Only a week before his death Augustus spent four days in Capri, during which he gave himself up 'entirely to his ease, behaving at the same time to those about him with the utmost good nature and complaisance.' He graced with his presence the sports of the fisher-boys, and gave them a

* *Vicinam Capreis insulam* (Monacone ?) *Apragopolim appellabat a desidia secedentium illuc e comitatu suo.*—Suet.

† His name is perhaps connected with the Arabic *masheb* or *masgheb*, meaning a guide.

special entertainment, making them 'scramble for fruit, victuals, and other things which he threw among them; in a word, he indulged himself in all the ways of amusement he could contrive.' A few days later the kindly old citizen Emperor, who had outlived the splendour of his youthful renown, lay dead in the arms of Livia at Nola. He was never intended for a great man.

It was under Tiberius Claudius Nero, his successor, that the 'narrow rock'* rose in material glory to the zenith of its fame, and won for itself a place in history to the end of all time. Remembered only by the splendid edifices in which he lived for more than ten years, Timberio, as they call him, is to the Capriotes of to-day what Arthur is to the Bretons. It is not my purpose to offer any vindication of the imperial misanthrope, of whom many hard things have been left on record by the pen of the accurate but prejudiced historian, no less than in the light and airy pages of the gossiping biographer. There is, however, little doubt as to the real reasons which prompted the Emperor to make choice of the island as a residence. Finding that the suspicious death of his son Germanicus had made Rome too hot to

* '*Angusta Caprearum in rupe.*' Juvenal, Sat. x. 93. Another reading is 'augusta.'

hold him, he carried out a project he had long brooded over,* and departed from a city made hateful to him by the presence of his mother. Starting from the capital one morning, he gave out that he was going to Nola† for the dedication of a temple in honour of his predecessor. But from Nola, 'the ancient cradle of the plastic art,' he came on to Capri, attracted, as Tacitus tells us, by the climate and perfect solitude of the island, 'for there are no harbours in the neighbourhood, and few stations even for ships of an inferior class; while no one could put in unperceived by the coastguard.' Suetonius hints at the same inglorious reason for his choice, telling us that Tiberius was 'greatly delighted with the island because it was accessible only by one small shore, and everywhere surrounded by craggy rocks of stupendous height and by a deep sea.'

I cannot do more than sketch in barest outline what Capri was like under the auspices of this singular man, who at the time of his sojourn here was the supreme ruler of an empire stretching from the English Channel to the first Nile cataract, and

* Tacitus plainly asserts this in *Ann.* iii. 31. He adds in another place, '*Sejanus huc flexit, ut Tiberium ad vitam procul Roma amœnis locis degendam impelleret.*'—*Ibid.*, iv. 41.

† *Specie dedicandi templa apud Capuam Jovi, apud Nolam Augusto, sed certus procul urbe degere.*—*Ibid.*, cap. 57.

from the Euphrates to Cape Finisterre. 'In proportion,' says the annalist,* 'as he had before devoted himself to public affairs, so now did he wholly give himself over to secret debauchery and hidden wickedness.' He changed his manners according to the times. During the life of Augustus, when in command of the army or in private life, his reputation was of the best; while Germanicus and Drusus were living he feigned to be virtuous; the good and bad in his character were equally mixed until the death of his mother;† but 'when all restraint was taken away, he gave himself up to every kind of wickedness and crime,' though Dacian and Parthian and German were overrunning the fairest provinces of his empire.

Although many of the buildings in Capri which we now see in ruins were already standing when Tiberius landed, there is no doubt that he largely improved and added to the works of Augustus. That what he did was on a scale of lavish magnificence and the most massive construction is evident from the rich character of the decorations, the marbles and mosaics and gems and

* *Ann.*, iv. 67.

† Notwithstanding that Livia gave birth to Tiberius while she was the wife of Claudius Nero, the face of her son bore a strong resemblance to that of Augustus, her second husband. I say no more.

sculptures which have from time to time been unearthed in enormous quantities. Of these I shall have something to say later on. It is enough now to mention that among other works the Claudian emperor improved the little harbour on the south side, built the Faro, and constructed villas and aqueducts and reservoirs in astonishing profusion. It had been well had he confined himself to such enterprises as these, which, however wasteful and out of season at a time when Rome was in sore straits, were at least in themselves not to be despised, although they were debased in the hands of Cæsar by the unworthy purposes which they were made to serve.

These were not the works by which the name of this arch-roisterer has been handed down to infamy on the page of history, and of Capriote history in particular. It is open to us to believe or not, as we will, that his soldiers in contempt for his drunken orgies christened him Biberius Caldius Mero, and that, being 'remote from the observation of the people of Rome, he abandoned himself to all the vicious propensities which he had but imperfectly concealed.' In Rome he had been dubbed 'Callipedes,' or the man who was always 'going to do' a thing, but never did it; whence it is plain that in course of

time he might have qualified as a full-blown lotos-eater. But in Capri he earned for himself the less honourable sobriquet of 'Caprineus,' and was thus apostrophized by a lampooner of the day :

> '*Asper et immitis, breviter vis omnia dicam?*
> *Dispeream si te mater amare potest.*'

Some tell us that he left his mark—a hoof-mark—upon every rood of rock in Capri. Many of his eccentric freaks have been recorded for our delectation in the pages of Suetonius and others; amongst them the oft-told tale of how, a few days after his arrival, as he was standing on the summit of the precipitous (and, as he thought, inaccessible) hill which he afterwards crowned with the Faro, a fisherman suddenly appeared, and humbly presented to him a large mullet which he had caught at the foot of the rock, and which he hoped his imperial master would deign to accept. But the simple *pescatore* had reckoned without his host. Tiberius was enraged, not so much at having his privacy invaded as by the nimbleness of the man in climbing the cliffs, which go sheer down seven hundred and fifty feet into the water. Thinking, possibly, that, as the fellow had scaled the mountain, it would be a good jest to make him help in scaling the fish, the Emperor ordered his face to be well rubbed down with it. The fisherman bore the

operation in silence ; but as he turned to go away Tiberius overheard him congratulating himself that he had not also offered his master a gigantic cray-fish which lay at the bottom of his basket. The hint was too good to be lost, and in a moment the poor wretch was writhing under a course of cancerous laceration compared to which the preceding part of the entertainment must have been a mere *hors d'œuvre.*

Not content with such brutal jesting, it is said that he used now and then, as a mere *passatempo*, to find an outlet for his capricious humours in deeds which savoured of downright insanity with a strong homicidal tendency. Taking an airing one day in his *chaise à porteur*, his imperial fingers were accidentally scratched by a bramble bush at the side of the path. The road-overseer, a centurion, was sent for, and promptly paid the penalty of his neglect by being whipped to death on the spot. Scarcely a day passed unstained by the blood of some luckless wight who for this or that trivial reason had fallen under the imperial displeasure. A poetaster, who was adjudged to have spoken in his verses disrespectfully of Agamemnon, was flung from the Salto into the sea. An imprudent historian, who exalted Brutus as 'ultimus Romanorum,' paid also for his indiscre-

tion with his life. Numbers were thrown into prison at the mere word of lurking informers, and escaped torture by suicide. Having grounds of suspicion against one who was a courtier and most intimate friend, he put him to the torture that he might be brought to a due acknowledgment of his guilt. Finding, however, that he had made a mistake, and, in fact, had got hold of the wrong man altogether, Tiberius put it out of his victim's power to divulge Court secrets by sending him over the cliff after the poet and the historian, having made due arrangements for the battering out of his brains by a boat's crew of soldiers in the water below.

We need feel no surprise that, with every opportunity of satisfying the desires of his heart, the Emperor was a miserable, anxious, fear-tossed man. He was detested by all, and he knew it. Surrounded, as the satirist tells us, by a 'grex' of Chaldean astrologers, whose art had no power to charm away his forebodings of evil to come, Tiberius tried in vain to dull by days and nights of dissipation the envenomed stings of fear. In the museum at Naples there is a colossal bust of the Emperor, which may serve as a representation of what he looked like at this time. The head is decked with a crown of leaves, the armour adorned

with military trophies, but there is a world of misery in the deep earnest lines of the brooding face, the powerful brows, the loosely-hanging lips; a glance is enough to show us that it is no mere ideal presentment, but the actual life-like portrait (after the manner of those old truth-telling artists) of a man with plenty of intellect, but without friends, or loved ones, or honour, or truth, or manhood.

Sejanus, his ignoble familiar, was playing a dangerous and desperate game by the Tiber. He was emperor—at any rate, in his own imagination—in all but name. His image and superscription were side by side with those of Cæsar upon the coins of the empire; his statues and busts were to be seen in half the public ways of Rome. For years he had been standing on the brink of a volcano, feeding himself in secret with thoughts of one day wearing the purple. Drusus and the children of the ill-starred Germanicus stood indeed between him and the throne. But such obstacles were scarcely worth consideration by a man like Sejanus, who made Livilla, the wife of Drusus, first dishonour her husband and then murder him. If he only played his cards well, there could be small doubt as to the issue. With Tiberius safe in Capri, and shameless Livia, the aged widow of Octavius, dead,

and Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, banished with her boys, things looked well for him.* He was a clever creature, no doubt, but no match for Tiberius, who knew when he had 'a wolf by the ears,' and who was nothing if not astute. How could Sejanus guess that Cæsar was only giving him rope when he made him joint consul with himself? that he stood on a pinnacle of sand which any instant might crumble under his feet? An awakening came, and his eyes were opened—but what could he do? In a cursed strait between two courses, either of which he was sagacious enough to know would equally entangle his feet more hopelessly than ever, the poor upstart's dilemma was quickly put an end to. A missive came from the Emperor to Rome which sealed his fate:

> *'Verbosa et grandis epistola venit*
> *A Capreis,'*

—a letter, says Juvenal, which threw every corner of the capital into commotion; a letter than which

* There is an eloquently beautiful statue of the second Agrippina, wife of Claudius, among the master-pieces in the Naples Museum (last portico, ground floor). She is seated, and with head gently inclined wears a thoughtful and grave look, as if conscious of coming sorrow and death. Her feet are crossed, and her joined hands lie listlessly upon her knees. This was the statue that Canova imitated in his figures of Napoleon's mother and the Venus Victrix.

surely a more pitiful one was never penned by mortal hand; of which the exordium—the 'insigne initium' of Tacitus—ran thus: 'What to write to you or how to write I know not; and what not to write at this time, may all the gods and goddesses torment me more than I daily feel that I suffer, if I do know!' It was a bungling, shifty kind of epistle, a perfectly characteristic effusion from the pen of the strange man of whom it may be truly said, as was said of our own harmless poet Gray, that 'he never spoke out.' Passions, feelings, ambitions were locked up in the nature of Tiberius as behind an impenetrable barrier, and everything had to be interpreted by the uncertain light of his external actions. But the senate thought that they could catch the straight drift of the imperial letter. Before the reading of it was ended the whole assembly sprang to their feet. With half a score of swords at his throat, Sejanus strove in vain to make his voice heard. Nemesis had found him out; he was hurried with every mark of infamy to the Mamertine dungeons in the living rock under the Capitol, the 'one gaol' with which, according to Juvenal, Rome in her young days was 'content'—the same 'Robur Tullianum' within whose gloomy recesses Jugurtha, King of Mauritania, had been starved

to death by Marius; exclaiming on his entrance, as he found the floor ankle-deep in water, 'By Hercules! how cold your bath is!' The statues of Sejanus were smashed in derision before his eyes as he passed along, and before the sun rose next morning he was strangled and dragged head downwards through the streets, and crushed into a bleeding mass of pulp beneath the heels of the citizens:

'*Sejanus ducitur unco*
Spectandus; gaudent omnes.'

After the death of this dangerous arch-plotter, Tiberius, so far from finding relief from his apprehensions, sank deeper and deeper into a condition almost of mania, with frequent abandonings of all moral restraint. Compared with the excesses laid to his charge the indecencies of the Lupercalia were but a sorry jest. He became more and more abjectly the slave of superstitious terror. For nine months he never showed himself beyond the walls of the Villa Jovis, and would stand for hours gazing out over the water—*speculabundus ex altissimâ rupe*—ready at a moment's notice, at the blazing up of a warning beacon-fire on the headland of Minerva, to flee to Syria or to Gaul in the swift galley that lay moored down below.

Twice during ten years Tiberius ventured to

steal secretly Romewards, on the first occasion going as far as the Cæsarean gardens and the Naumachia of Augustus in the Flaminian fields by the Tiber, whose banks were lined by his secret orders with the men of the imperial guard. There his heart failed him, and he turned his prow and went back again down the stream amid the wonderment of the citizens. Once again, a few weeks before his death, he came to the city, in the streets of which the astrologers had foretold that he should never more set his foot; but, 'ostento territus,' frightened by some omen or other, he reached no farther than the seventh milestone on the Appian Way, which now forms one of the ends of a parapet on the piazza of the Capitol, hard by the colossal statues of Castor and Pollux. Once more he turned back, and, falling into the clutches of a deepening malady at Astore, with difficulty reached one of the villas of Lucullus, near Misenum. Here, since winds and waves would not permit him to cross to Capri, he, with great persistence, roused himself to the compassing of such of the delights of life as were still within his reach, and literally with one foot in the grave gave himself up afresh to his old riotous ways and half-crazy pranks.

It was but the blazing up of the torch ere it was extinguished. He over-exerted himself, caught a

chill, and died on March 16, A.D. 37, at the age of seventy-eight—a miserable ending of a life that had been perhaps as strange a commingling of good and evil as this world has ever seen. Some affirm that his attendants hastened his end by starvation. The record of Tacitus is that one morning he fainted away from bodily exhaustion, and that, thinking he was dead, those around him rushed from the chamber to greet Caius Caligula, the unworthy son of the brave Germanicus. But Tiberius, opening his eyes again, called for help, and Caius stood trembling before him till one Macro at his side whispered softly: 'Heap more bed-clothes on him, and leave him!'*

Seneca narrates that 'a little before' the end came, 'finding himself dying,' the Emperor took his ring off 'and held it awhile as if he would deliver it to somebody, but put it again on his finger and lay for some time with his hand clenched and without stirring. Then, suddenly calling upon his attendants, and no person making answer, he rose, but, his strength failing him, he fell down a little way from his bed.' We do not know exactly how the end came—enough that he died of being Tiberius. When the tidings of his

* The words of the annalist are: '*Macro intrepidus opprimi senem injectu multæ vestis jubet, discedique a limine.*'

death reached Rome a shout of joy, mingled with curses, went up to heaven : 'Away with him to the Tiber!' It was not seemly that such ashes should lie in the sepulchre of their kings. The bringing of his body to Rome was attended with much difficulty, and at one place, Atella, the sturdy country folk laid rough hands on the bier, and were within an inch of making a bonfire of the whole thing. Ultimately he found a resting-place in the stately mausoleum of Augustus—that venerable cypress-decked tomb and fortress—where in these fallen days a spangled circus troupe gyrates over the dust of Cæsars—Livia, the 'mother of her country,' who gave Tiberius birth, and was called by Caligula 'Ulysses in petticoats'; and Germanicus her noblest foe, with Agrippina, his faithful wife, and the daughter murdered by the matricide Nero; and the worshipful Marcellus, and Octavia scorned for the 'rare Egyptian,' and Agrippa, builder of the Pantheon, and the poor poisoned lad Britannicus. Many centuries after, when the grand old tomb had been rent stone from stone by the masterful hands, first of Alaric and then of the Colonnas, the body of Rienzi—ultimus Romanorum—was dragged hither, and his ashes scattered by Jewish hands over the soil of the ageless ruin. You must seek

in the Palazzo Corea, in a sunless *vicolo* called the Via dei Pontefici, near the Ripetta, for all that is left of the vast 'tumulus of earth raised on a lofty basement of white marble shaded by evergreens from the base to the summit, which terminated in a pinnacle crowned with a bronze statue of Augustus,' with its fourteen sepulchral *loculi*, or chambers, and its lofty obelisks and sacred groves of ilex and bay and cypress, the glory of the Campus Martius. Now you can walk in through the gloomy marble-paved *cortile* and take a place among the crowd of *canaglia* and listen to the dubious quips of Pagliaccio, the white-robed jester, and watch Bucefalo's performing pony, and the thrilling antics of half-naked nymphs, and all the rest of it, for the sum of two sous. And if amid the ringing laughter and 'Bravos!' of the unwashed *plebs urbana* you can spare a thought for the dead past, you may remember that you are sitting at the grave of Tiberius Claudius Nero. *Hominem te esse memento.*

> *'Sceptre and crown must tumble down,*
> *And in the dust be equal laid*
> *With the poor crooked scythe and spade.'*

'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar the word of GOD came unto John, the son of Zecharias, in the wilderness.' That was in the

second year of the Emperor's sojourn in Capri. Four years later followed the Crucifixion, of which announcement must have come in due course to Tiberius at the Villa Jovis.* As I pace the grass-grown courts of that wonderful ruin, I remember that he who used to dwell within its walls was the ruler whose friendship the timid Pilate feared to forfeit—'If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend'—the morose and melancholy being who, moved by the remorseful record of his procurator, came, as Tertullian bears witness, to be so convinced of the Divinity of the Nazarene that he willed to enrol Him among the gods, and forbade any hand to be laid on those who believed in Him.†

As a man, Tiberius had fallen from the bright promise of his youth, which was marked by a singular moderation and self-restraint. As an emperor he had done much for Rome, and given to his people the best of his strength and thought. The man who said, when urged to lay heavier taxes on the provinces, 'It is the shepherd's part to shear, not to flay the sheep,' could not have been

* 'Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus est.'—Tacitus, *Ann.*, xi. 44.

† 'Comminatus periculum accusatoribus Christianorum.—Tertullian, *Apol.* v. 6.

devoid of feeling. Nor has he lacked apologists even for his vices. Velleius in old times, and Dean Merivale in our own day, have warned us not to put too much faith in the accuracy of the pictures, of which we would fain believe that the dark colours have been deepened either by personal spite or official prejudice.

We need hardly take into account rambling old Dion Cassius (third century), seeing that he has left us little but a jumble of actions good and bad, dotted thickly with extravagant and puerile tales worthy only of an Oriental fancy. With the words of Lord Byron in our memory, 'I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead,' we must accept the dark record of Suetonius *cum grano;* for though the chatty biographer always told the truth when he could see it, there is no question but that a great deal of his information came down to him from Agrippina, the mother of Nero, who had little reason for speaking lightly of the dead Emperor's vices. It is, moreover, highly probable that some of the most outrageous stories which have reached us had their origin in the vamped-up charges brought against Tiberius by envious courtiers and unscrupulous calumniators —men whom he himself spared no effort to hunt

down, and every word of whose scurrilous diatribes he fatuously caused to be carefully scheduled and preserved in the public archives.

The darkest blot upon the career of Tiberius was the death of Germanicus, his nephew and adopted son, although it is more difficult to say what his actual share in that miserable murder was than it is to discover what Rome thought about it. It formed the turning-point in the Emperor's life. From that day forward he began to mope ; he hid himself from the eyes of men, and delivered himself into the hands of astrologers ; nor did his good name ever recover from the blight cast upon it by the lingering death of the popular idol at the hands of Lucius Piso. Germanicus had passed through the gates of Rome on his last campaign amid the foreboding whispers of many who had said, 'Those whom the plebs love die young ;' and he deserved a happier fate than a poisoned cup of wine. Had he not wiped out a national disgrace, purged Rome of her most dangerous foe, bound the olive garland of peace on the brow of the remotest provinces, and borne himself towards every man so that every man loved him? When it was heard in the capital that he lay dead on Syrian sands, strong men wept and bewailed him, not knowing what we know, that it was, after all, a kind and timely end

for one who from a feverish weakness of character was ill-fitted to wear the purple. Had he become emperor, his epitaph might have been the epitaph of Galba, 'Omnium consensu capax imperii nisi imperasset'—'All men would have thought him fit to rule had he not ruled.'

So let the curtain fall upon dark scenes too long drawn out. But in truth, here in 'dites Capreæ,'* with all these sombre memories of departed greatness floating about me, it is difficult to end my musings. The house in which these lines are penned stands under the shadow of that Villa Jovis which for ten years was the home and haunt of a man who, whatever his faults or virtues, probably never really liked, and was never really liked by, a single living being, save and except his young wife Agrippina. The elder Pliny speaks of Tiberius as 'the most gloomy of mankind'; Mouravieff among the moderns calls him '*le plus exécrable.*' I have tried in vain to discover the exact estimation in which his memory is now held by the Capriotes. He is to them as a shadowy hero lost in the mists of time—a being concerning whom the greater part of them have no more accurate knowledge than has the old woman who the other day informed me

* Statius, *Silv.*, iii. 1, 128.

that he lived 'some time, oh yes! some time ago, long before her grandmother!

It is hard to acquit Tiberius of one vice, and that one of which I am constantly being reminded in Capri. It is as if a shred of the imperial mantle had fallen upon these peasant folk, his former subjects, and endowed them with a stolid indifference to animal suffering. Like their neighbours of the Campagna and Calabria, these Capriotes seem to have absolutely no notion of kindness to dumb creatures. Little do they know of that lesson of nature sung by Wordsworth:

> *'Never to blend our pleasure or our pride*
> *With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.'*

Their cruelty is differentiated from cruelty of a similar kind elsewhere by its utter wantonness. The Japanese, when he detaches a cutlet from the living but unflinching carp, or *koi* fish, tells you that he does it with a definite idea of teaching his child a lesson of fortitude in time of tribulation. The Singhalese, when he flays a turtle alive, in order that his customers may carry home a warm and still quivering slice of its flesh, does it because he fancies, or possibly has learnt by experience, that the flavour of the morsel is thus rendered richer and more toothsome. But the Capriote will vivisect a lizard, and gloat over its internal arrange-

ments, for no other reason than that he may amuse himself. A child, whom the wildest fancy could not imagine to be devoted to scientific research, will tie a string to the leg of a bird and swing it round his head, or pull all its feathers out and skip with delight at its writhings. From such juvenile amenities it is obviously but a step to the torture of a cat, a goat, a dog, or a horse. But, then, when he grows up to man's estate, the Capriote does not skin eels alive, or kick his wife to death, or blast his neighbour's life by anonymous post-cards. So, perhaps, as an English lotos-eater I had better say no more.

CHAPTER III.

EXIT CÆSAR.

'The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against Fate,
Death lays his icy hand on kings.'

'Quid tituli? quid opes?'

By what mighty agency, visible or invisible, spiritual or material, has Capri—the Capri of the Cæsars—become, as it is to-day, a vast dismantled garden?

We may say of the Romans what Empedocles said of the men of Agrigentum, that they built as if they were to live for ever, and feasted as if they were to die to-morrow. After the wind and weather of eighteen centuries, my finger cannot pick off even a crumb of the adamantine cement that still binds together the fragments of imperial ruin. Walls three feet thick stand torn asunder as if they were morsels of ship

biscuit; at every few score yards a bit of cyclopean masonry, that once may have screened a Court beauty from the vulgar gaze, or barred the light and air of heaven from an ill-starred captive, arrests the eye, majestic even in its desolation; masses of rubbish, that once echoed to the sounds of revelry or shrouded the mystic rites of a god, peep out from between tangled vine-roots and clumps of sheeny aloes, telling with mute eloquence of the impotence of man's utmost toil; on every side downfall without decay, abundant upheaval but little actual demolition, set the mind turning over and over the same unanswered conjecture. What power, human or Divine, has wrought so great a change?

If it be true that after the decease of Tiberius the senate passed a decree for the destruction of the palaces and other buildings erected by him in Capri, the order could only have been partially executed, seeing that not only did his successor, Caius Caligula, half buffoon, half barbarian, an altogether ill-favoured beast, put on the 'toga virilis' in the island; but his sycophant, Vitellius, ninth Cæsar, and king of gourmands, spent a part of his eight months' reign here in A.D. 69; and Commodus, 'the handsomest man of his age,' as Herodian calls him, who lived the life of a *fin de*

siècle Tsar, singeing his beard, like the elder Dionysius of Syracuse, through fear of a barber, sent hither into banishment his wife Crispina and his sister Lucilla.

After that, for nearly six hundred years, little is known of Capri or its people. Lying beyond the fringe of those billows of change which century after century flooded half Europe with wreck and ruin, and unmoved by the rise and fall of empires in east and west, I dare say that the life of a Capriote was pretty much what it is to-day. Probably the island remained the personal property of the Roman Emperors until A.D. 476, when Romulus Augustulus, the last feeble monarch of the western empire, breathed his last on the Pizzofalcone, in Naples. But we know nothing for certain until the sixth century, when Capri seems to have been bestowed by a certain Tertullus upon the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino. In A.D. 868 it was taken from them by the Carlovingian Louis and given to the doge of Amalfi, a change of masters which quickly brought it into stormy waters, and gave it a share in the calamities of that spirited little republic. The isolated situation and strong natural defences of the rock were no safeguard against the attacks of Saracens, who again and again in the ninth and tenth cen-

turies moored their galleys at the Marina, and made havoc from end to end, driving the island folk like sheep into their last refuge in the vast grotto under the Castiglione, and carrying off so many prisoners to the African coast that there was scarcely a *vignajuolo* left to dress the vines, or a fisherman to catch 'the vaulting tunny in the main.'

In the early part of the eleventh century Capri was annexed by Guaimar IV. to his kingdom of Lombardy, and in 1075 came into the hands of the Norman Robert Guiscard—Dux Apuliæ et Calabriæ,* changes by no means productive of tranquillity, 'in mezzo a tante peripezie e contrasti non potea essere molto felice.' Matters improved as little under Robert's sons as they did under his brother and hard-handed nephew, the latter of whom on Christmas Day, 1130, was crowned as Roger II. in his new Cappella Palatina in Palermo, the most exquisite palace-chapel in the world. The Capriotes appear to have made objections to doing homage to their new Norman masters, and a faction of them, with a party of soldiers, withdrew to what is now called Barbarossa's Castle, and were not brought to order till they had made a sturdy resistance.

* He lies buried in the badly restored church of SS. Trinità at Venosa, which he founded in 1058.

So far as we know, Capri was as little affected by the troubles of William the Bad and William the Good as by the later prosperity of the Emperor Frederick and Conrad and Manfred; prosperity rudely broken in upon by the advent of the Angevine line, after the death of Conradin (A.D. 1268), whose barbarous murder in the Piazza del Mercato was expiated fourteen years afterwards by the massacre of the Sicilian Vespers, when Capri, with many another fair and fertile acre, slipped from the grasp of the ferocious brother of Saint Louis. Three years later, during the struggle between Charles II. and the Sicilian James, the poor islanders found themselves in the thick of the *mêlée*, and were compelled once more by the prowess of Bernardo Sorriano to accept the hated Sicilian yoke. But Charles the Lame rescued them before long, and conferred upon them, in return for their good-will, a perpetual exemption from all financial *devoirs* to the State. Not only was this immunity confirmed by his successors Robert the Wise and Joanna I., but as time went on it was crowned by further benefits at the hands of the Aragonese Alfonso I., who (A.D. 1448) ordained that Capri (1) should never be alienated from the royal demesne, (2) should receive a confirmation of all previous privileges and immunities, (3) should pay

no hated hearth-tax, and (4) should receive from the fishermen of Naples a fixed sum for every garfish caught in Capriote waters.

So the Capriotes went on their way down the stream of time, now in sunshine, now in shadow; happiest, we may be sure, when they had no history, and were undisturbed by *tout le tremblement* of high politics that kept the dwellers on the shores of the bay in a ferment. A historian ascribes to them a spirit greater than their fortunes—'in summa egestate tamen vivunt contendentes superbia.' But twofold troubles fell upon them later. In 1535 Kheyreddin Barbarossa, Beglerbeg of Algiers, and Capudan Pasha of Suleyman's fleet, coming from the Golden Horn with a squadron of galleys, galleots and brigantines, plundered Reggio, stole a march upon the lovely Giulia Gonzaga at Fondi, and landed in Capri with a horde of Musulman desperadoes and his trusty lieutenant Aydin Reïs, known as 'Drub-devil.' He sacked and burnt the place, and hoisted his horse-tail banner over the castle on the crags in the centre of the island, making his name a terror from the Dardanelles to Cadiz. Hardly had the Capriotes recovered from the smart, when in 1656 a horrible plague-fiend visited them, and the whole island became a charnel-house—none escaping except the monks in

the Certosa, who, like the worthy merchant of Wood Street in the plague of London, shut themselves up and refused all communication with the outer world. Many families were absolutely extinguished by the ravages of the pestilence, and their property, in default of heirs, was appropriated by the Benedictines. Here is a picture of Capri at this period from the pen of the historian Capaccio: 'The town of Capri possesses an exceedingly strong fort and about two hundred inhabitants, the village of Anacapri having also two hundred. The latter is built upon a lofty rock, the approach to which is by a narrow and difficult path, though it is easy enough to the inhabitants, who carry burdens along it. The people of Capri are free from all taxes and dues, and are by special favour permitted at all times to carry arms. They live in great poverty, and are often pillaged by the Turks, who carry off the mariners and the fishermen into captivity.'*

Under successive Spanish viceroys the islanders suffered many hardships from men who, with few exceptions, showed themselves tyrannical and unprincipled governors. The incessant attacks of

* Evelyn records in his diary, under 1644, that he durst not venture by sea from Naples to Rome because of Turkish pirates.

over-sea marauders were even a worse worry. 'Every day,' wrote Parrino in 1727, 'many unhappy fishermen are carried off as slaves by pirates, and especially by renegades, who come hither to inflict every kind of barbarous outrage on their native island.' This lasted till Bourbon times, when Charles III. (1748-1759) brought about a better state of affairs by the organization of proper guards and the construction of defences. He it was also who took in hand the work of excavation afterwards continued under Ferdinand IV. by Hadrawa, who tells us that in the latter half of the last century the condition of the island folk was greatly improved. There was then plenty of business doing in the way of wine and oil and silk. The Capri wine, which resembled claret, and was considered by many to be superior to the best produced on the mainland, was made to the annual amount of 4,000 hogsheads, and sold at from nine to twenty-five francs the *barile*, which is the price at which you can buy an excellent sort at the present day. Of excellent oil, upwards of 6,000 *staji*, or bushels, worth ten francs apiece, were produced every year. The fish all round the island, and especially the tunny, which seems now to have betaken itself to the Salernian gulf, were so plentiful that upwards of 2,000 tons weight was

shipped to Naples in 1784, besides what was eaten in the island. Let us hope that the fish had less bones and more flavour than they have now. Among other industries were the coral fishery, and the catching of quails, which in those days visited the island twice a year in much larger numbers than they do now, as many as 150,000 having been caught in a fortnight.

On January 23, 1799, when the 'Repubblica Partenopea' was proclaimed by Championnet, orders were sent to Capri for the unfurling of the new flag. Solemn Te Deum was sung in the cathedral, and the syndic D. Carlo Arcucci, being requested by the military commandant to address the assembled multitude, made the following laconic and two-edged oration: 'I respond, my people, with gladness to the request of his Excellency, seeing that now all is ours, and from this day forward we shall stand in need of nought.' The applause of his audience by no means harmonized with the feelings of the Frenchman, who said nothing, but retired in dudgeon. At the fall of the republic, six months later, Capri came once more under the sceptre of Ferdinand, but after six years, when Masséna set up Joseph Bonaparte, she shared the fate of Naples, and was constrained to give quarters to a French force under Captain Chervet.

The island now became the scene of a pretty bit of fighting work that does not altogether redound to the credit of the British arms. In the Mediterranean naval operations of 1806, Capri was looked upon by the allies of Ferdinand as a station of considerable strategical importance, and Sir Sidney Smith, with half a dozen men-of-war, made a descent upon it and captured it by a brilliant *coup de main.* Colonel (afterwards Sir Hudson) Lowe, who was left to hold the island in the Bourbon interest with 1,800 Maltese and Corsican troops,* set to work to put it into an impregnable state of defence, and succeeded so well—at least, in his own imagination—that he dubbed it 'Little Gibraltar,' and defied the Gaul. His challenge was quickly taken up. On July 15, 1808, Joachim Murat was crowned King of Naples, and lost no time in making up his mind that the alien bit of bunting on the grim rock out in the bay must come down. Accordingly he sent Colonel Pietro Colletta, a Neapolitan engineer, in the disguise of a fisherman, to ascertain where it was possible to effect a landing.†

* Corsica ceased to be in British occupation in 1796. How came it, then, that ten years later Corsicans formed part of Lowe's garrison? I have some recollection of Napoleon twitting his gaoler with having once commanded Corsican *condamnés*, but I cannot verify it.

† Pietro Colletta afterwards became Minister of War, and

On the morning of October 4, 1808, an expedition of 126 transports and fighting ships, having 2,000 men on board, weighed anchor and made sail in three divisions for Capri—one from Naples, one from Castellammare and one from Salerno. Some steered for Orica, on the western side of the island, and others for the Grande and Piccola Marinas. At three p.m. they opened fire, and thoroughly caught Colonel Lowe napping—not literally, indeed, seeing that he had been watching the movements of the fleet since daybreak, and had made up his mind that the Frenchmen were steering for the Isle of Ponza, fifty miles away beyond Ischia. Great must have been his astonishment when he discovered, as he quickly did, what the real game was to be. Not that there should have been any real cause for alarm. From the nature of the island coast there are but three, or at the most four, places where it is possible to land troops, and, with 'Little Gibraltar' at their backs, it seemed impossible that the English could lose the island before the return of the squadron. But

died at Florence in 1831. In 1860 an indifferent statue of him was put up in the Villa Nazionale at Naples, near the little temples of Virgil and Tasso. He is represented as holding a letter in his hand, on which is inscribed the word 'Capri.'

it was a day of mistakes. What at first was but an error, before evening fell had become a disaster. Murat's trick was one that should not have deceived a British soldier. His detachments from Naples and Castellammare made a feint of delivering the whole force of the attack at the Marina and the Mulo—a mere ruse to conceal the disembarkation of the main body of 1,500 men at Orica, near the site of the old Roman villa of Damecuta. The fatuous folly of the English commander had left this end of the island unprotected by a single piece of artillery; as the result of which neglect the French effected a landing with little difficulty, and, having escaladed the cliffs, drove back the Maltese across several hundred yards of rocky slope, in the direction of Anacapri. As the shades of night fell, another detachment, that had made a footing for itself near the Blue Grotto, climbed a difficult path and took the defenders in the rear. Major Hamill, who was in command, was shot dead while directing the fire of his men, and the whole body, to the number of 750, laid down their arms. The remains of the brave Irish officer, who was buried where he fell, on a spot now marked by a fig-tree, were removed many years afterwards to the cemetery, where a tablet records his valour.

Anxiously now did Colonel Lowe, down in the town of Capri, look out for the absent squadron, which was lying weather-bound and helpless away at Ponza. One thing was plain: no power on earth could hold Capri long, with an enemy who held the Marina Grande and a battery on the heights of Monte Solaro that swept every nook and corner of the lower ground. An irrevocable error had been made, and nothing was left for Lowe but to make himself as snug as he could and wait for the wind to change. But now began a pretty bit of comedy. At the end of three days the English squadron was seen bearing up; but, though the ships surrounded the island, and for a few hours cut off all communication with the mainland, before they could render any real service a fierce *ponente* (the wind most dreaded by mariners in these parts) sprang up, and they were obliged to haul off again and stand out to sea. The wily Murat, looking on from the Punta di Campanella, took advantage of this piece of good-fortune to land a quantity of supplies in small feluccas from Massa, just across the bay; a daring enterprise, the success of which was cheaply purchased by the loss of the boats which they were compelled to beach in a battered condition on the Marina. Invigorated by their newly-arrived rations (for they had been

reduced almost to starvation-point), the French now fell furiously upon Capri, and, though they were repulsed with heavy loss, they succeeded by fresh advances in making Lowe's position more and more untenable.

On the following day, October 16, a look-out man reported a war-ship in sight, but it must have been like that *Pietra bianca* rock outside Hong Kong, which so nearly resembles a junk under full sail that an old sea-dog on the starboard tack once declined to give way to it till he found himself within a cable's length of everlasting smash. It was but an idle rumour, and, like Mariana in the moated grange, aweary of waiting for one who delayed his coming, Colonel Lowe sent a flag of truce the same evening into the French head-quarters, offering to surrender on condition that he and all his should be allowed to embark unmolested, and that the Capriotes should suffer nothing for their fidelity. To this King Murat, who held a strong hand in trumps, would not agree, but sent his aide-de-camp, Colonel Manches, to inform the English commandant that the capitulation must be unconditional. While the officer was actually on his way across the bay with this ultimatum in his pocket, the British squadron once more hove in sight. Colonel Manches thereupon

judiciously kept the despatch in his pocket, and it was left to the English naval commander on his arrival to protest against the contemplated surrender of the island. But Lowe so pressed him and so strenuously urged upon him that he could not go behind his pledged word to Murat, that in the end they all, to the number of 780, made the best of their way, on October 26, down to the Piccola Marina and off to Sicily; after which time, up to the period of the Bourbon restoration in 1814, Capri remained in the hands of the French.

On the whole, a piece of bungling and bad tactics from first to last, to which, it is satisfactory to think, we cannot find many parallels in our military annals. Not to end this chapter with a bitter taste, here is an extract from the light rhymes in which Tom Moore has enshrined the memory of Napoleon's timid gaoler:

'*Sir Hudson Lowe, Sir Hudson* Low
(*By name, and, oh! by nature so*),
As thou art fond of persecutions,
Perhaps thou'st read, or heard repeated,
How Captain Gulliver was treated,
When thrown among the Lilliputians.

'*They tied him down—these little men did—*
And having valiantly ascended
Upon the mighty man's protuberance,

They did so strut!—upon my soul,
It must have been extremely droll
To see their pigmy pride's exuberance!

'Alas! alas! that it should happen
To mighty men to be caught napping!—
Though different, too, these persecutions;
For Gulliver, there, took the nap,
While here, the Nap, oh, sad mishap!
Is taken by the Lilliputians.'

Well might the *Nautical Chronicle* remark (vol. xxi., 1809): 'Some of the newspapers have affected to disguise the importance of the late successful attack of the enemy on the island of Capri, in the Gulf of Naples. One of them actually made the following comment on the French account: "A pompous description is given in the French papers of the capture of the island of Capri, a station we never heard of before." Now, any schoolboy who has ever read Tacitus or Suetonius has heard of Capræ—its more modern history is to be found in Swinburne and Brydon—and as a test of its actual importance we shall only observe that Buonaparte and his generals do not waste their means in *useless* enterprise; and what furnishes matter for exultation at Paris may be pretty generally deplored in London.'

I add no more than the words of Sir William Napier, who observes ('Peninsular War,' vol. ii.)

that 'Sir Hudson Lowe first became known to history by losing, in a few days, a post that might have been defended for many years.'

In more recent times there has been nothing in the history of Capri to interest the foreigner. In 1837 a terrible visitation of cholera destroyed many of the inhabitants, who were laid in pitched coffins and buried in the ground above the Camerelle. At Anacapri, which also suffered severely, the victims were interred close to the hermitage of S. Maria di Citrella. Two years later came a plague of caterpillars, which, notwithstanding the exertions of the peasants, who burnt them in sacks, made great havoc among the vines and fruit-trees. In 1846-7 the vines were again brought to such an extremity by the inroads of disease, that for a year or two not a single barrel of wine was made.

By the plebiscite of October 21, 1860, Capri followed the fortunes of Naples, and on its annexation to the kingdom of Italy ceased to be a *piazza de' armi*, in consequence of which the island forts were abandoned and left to ruin, and the military stores transported to the mainland.



GRANDE MARINA, CAPRI—SHOWING THE NEW ROAD

To face p. 71.

CHAPTER IV.

LOWLAND.

'*Cœli temperies hieme mitis objectu montis; quo sæva ventorum arcentur: æstas in favonium obversa, et aperto circum pelago peramæna.*'—Tacitus, Desc. of Capri.

Up from the line of gaudy fishing boats that fringe the quaint landing-place at the Grande Marina, facing Vesuvius, several steep and slippery paths, fringed with lemon groves and vineyards, lead to the top of the ridge where Capri nestles between the hills of Castiglione and San Michele. For many ages, before the marauding Saracens compelled the islanders to take refuge higher up, the town lay by the margin of the bay between the Punta Francesco and Aiano, round the church of San Costanzo, past which the new carriage-road now winds along.

As we follow this, the first piece of man's ancient handiwork that meets the eye is the mouth of the massive Roman Cloaca, or main sewer, in

the sea-wall, about fifty yards from the Hôtel Grotte Bleue. In the present aspect of this ruin there is indubitable evidence of a bygone convulsion of nature, to which agency alone can be attributed the reversal of the dip of the drain, which, instead of being (as must have been the case when first constructed) from south to north, is now from north to south, at an angle of between 20° and 25°. This disturbance, later than the Roman occupation, occurred probably many years after the subsidence of the centre of the island on the south side, where now the land slopes steeply down to the Piccola Marina.

A few yards beyond the Cloaca a narrow lane, by the side of the Hôtel du Louvre, leads in about ten minutes to the Villa Haan, on the site of a temple of Isis, many relics of whose worship, together with fragments of sculpture, have been found under the soil. The villa overlooks on one side the bay, and on another the *place d'armes*, a spacious level grass-grown tract, artificially enlarged by a line of arches on the southern and western sides, and, as we may suppose, the scene of the games at which the Emperor Augustus was present just before he died. A hundred yards beyond, a path, winding westwards through gardens, opens out on to the shore and the extensive ruins of the Palazzo a

Mare, about which I shall have something to say later on.

Returning to the Hôtel du Louvre, a bend in the road brings us to the small church of San Costanzo, the patron and protector of the island, who, according to local tradition, once delivered Capri by a miracle from destruction at the hands of the Saracens. The cupola-crowned edifice, which is supposed to have been the earliest Christian place of worship in the south of Italy, either stands on the site of, or else actually was itself originally, a pagan temple, of which relics have been found in the shape of Byzantine frescoes. Once upon a time the interior was ornamented by fourteen *giallo-antico* fluted columns, of which all but one were taken away in 1751 and set up in the royal palace of Caserta; the remaining one now lies broken on the floor of the building near the door.

Leaving the church, and pursuing our way up the carriage-road through masses of pale lemons and vines running riot among the olive and fig trees, we reach in about twenty minutes a spacious house on the left hand, the Palazzo Inglese or Canale, the principal entrance to which is in a lane leading up from the road. It was once the abode of kings when they came to Capri to shoot quails; but now, with the deep scars of French cannon-

balls in its western wall, and a generally out-at-elbows appearance, it wears a faded and forlorn look. The house was rebuilt and enlarged in the last century by Sir Nathaniel Thorold, who, having outrun the constable at home, took up his abode in Capri, where he acquired considerable riches by trading in salt and dried codfish. During the French attack in 1808 Colonel Lowe had his head-quarters here, until the Frenchmen up on Solaro made it too hot for him.

Another turn in the road and we are on the top of the ridge at the base of the Castiglione, from which there is an extensive view on each side: on the south, down to where the Piccola Marina (or Mulo, as it is locally called) lies hidden under the rocky slope, beyond which stretches the wide Tyrrhenian Sea; and on the north, over the bay towards Naples and Vesuvius. Passing close under the walls of the suppressed convent of St. Theresa—utilized first as barracks, and after Bourbon times as an invalid hospital for soldiers, and now let out in tenements, part being used as a prison—in five minutes we are in the town of Capri, which Hadrawa (Letters, 1793) thus describes: 'It is surrounded by a wall and stands half a mile distant from the sea. The ground all round is uneven, and the houses are badly built and flat-

roofed. The cathedral is an ordinary edifice, and remarkable for nothing else than the pavement in the presbytery. Close to the cathedral is the palace of the Bishop, where the present Monseigneur Gamboni resides when in Capri. The canons who form the chapter have their several houses, and some are the possessors of fair farms. It is commonly said that the revenues of the see are drawn from the sale of quails; but there are also funds which pertain to it. Over against the episcopal house is the new clerical seminary, with an inscription written by the aforesaid monseigneur. Close by you see an institution (*conservatorio*) for boys, with another inscription. A little square, which, beginning at the cathedral and ending at the house of the Customs officer, forms a very narrow enclosure, is the market-place of Capri, where they sell beans and certain fruits, sometimes macaroni, but meat hardly ever. If through ill-luck a cow falls from a rock and is killed, they proclaim throughout the island by a trumpet that the flesh will be sold. As you go out of the market you pass through a gateway leading to a Gothic castle [now dismantled] with a third inscription of Monseigneur Gamboni. Descending a few steps, you come to a commodious house with red ornamentation and a terrace platform and

trellis-work supported on columns. This house has been for many years the dwelling of the governors. At the Marina [Grande] one sees a miserable barrack, which has, however, the name of an inn, where one can find nothing, not even a bed.' Evidently one of those *locandas*, not uncommon in the country districts of Italy, where there is offered you, according to the proverb, *piu fumo ch' arrosto*—more smoke than roast—and where the *consommations* promised are anything but consummations 'devoutly to be wished,' places eminently suggestive even from the outside of *insalata d'aglio* swimming in oil. 'A stranger,' adds Hadrawa, 'who wishes to inspect the island without inconvenience, should first make ample provision for, at least, three days, and then should go straight to the lodging of the governor, who is always willing to receive strangers, and who, if his own house be full, will make up for it by obtaining accommodation in the house of Canale.' The 'miserable barrack' has long since given place to a dozen decent hotels, but in other respects the visible aspect of the town has probably changed but little during the last hundred years.

A glance at the map will show that Capri town stands snugly ensconced between lofty hills. Westward rise the frowning vertical walls of

Monte Solaro, absolutely unscalable except on the north, at the point where the new road has been blasted out of their solid face. To the east, a gradually rising path trends to the summit of Lo Capo, crowned by the enormous ruins of the Villa Jovis.

Be it understood that Capri boasts of but one road along which it is possible for a carriage to pass, the one already mentioned as running for a distance of two miles up from the sea to Anacapri. All the other ways are mere rocky or lava-paved alleys from six to ten feet wide, and as often as not broken into steps. Leading out of the piazza (which could well be accommodated on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre) are three of these alleys, by which we can reach several objects of interest and a hundred superb points of view at the eastern end of the island. The widest of them, just beyond the steps of the cathedral, winds down by the Hiddigeigei cafè (kept by an Italian Jew, who is a purveyor of everything from blacking to black coffee, and from jam to jewels), past the Hôtel Pagano, till we reach the Quisisana, whose 'English landlady' survives only in the pages of Baedeker. Turning to the left, we follow the remains of a very massively constructed semicircular line of ruined arches, nearly half a mile long and twenty

feet wide, known as the Camerelle or 'Little Chambers,' which extended at one time from Tragara to the Castiglione, skirting the Unghia Marina, and Valentino. It was thought by G. M. Secondo and Rezzonico, with no sufficient reason, that the Camerelle formed part of a Roman palace; but their construction forbids any such idea. Hadrawa and Romanelli found in them the site of the imperial Sellaria, while others have conjectured them to be the relics of a large 'circo Caprense.' Mangoni's opinion is more likely, that the whole vast structure was nothing but a fine viaduct with water reservoirs underneath, many of which still line the path with their cemented walls, and the *lacerti* always found in Roman cisterns, plainly visible.

Half an hour's walk over the Punta Tragara, and along the shoulder of the Tuoro Grande or Telegrafo hill, brings us by a track commanding magnificent views to a belvedere overlooking the Cala (or bay) of Mitromania, whence, by going inland a little, we can wind round into another path that in a few minutes lands us at the top of a hundred and eighty steps, forming a rough *vico-luccio*, reconstructed by Feola in 1836. This stairway leads down to a grotto supposed by some to have been dedicated to Cybele, and by others to

the Shades; in the latter case its name of Matro or Mitromania would come from 'Mater Manium,' which, according to Varro, stands for 'Dea Manium.' But the best opinion identifies it with a temple of Mithras, from which point of view it is a place that yields in interest to no other in the island, taking us back to myths and mysteries far anterior to the times of the Cæsars. As we look into this venerable nature-built temple, with its fern and ivy-clad rocky lintel, our antiquarian zest sinks for a moment into the background, and a certain religious awe steals over us at the remembrance of the men who in past ages were wont to throng hither with their joys and their wearinesses, their vows and aspirations, craving protection and peace from a beneficent and compassionate power — a divinity whose cult was for generations no mean rival to the worship of the Son of Mary, in days when Greek myths were found wanting and Olympic rites had grown stale and unsatisfying. The religion of Mithras, who by some has been identified with Osiris, was a religion redolent of joy and full of fascination to the men of Greece and Rome, to whom the socialism preached by Divine lips at Nazareth and Capernaum was as a sealed book. But here to-day, in this venerable natural temple, ruinous walls and a down-trodden

shrine are all that remains of the 'magnum Mithræ antrum,' the presence-chamber of 'the unconquered god of the sun.'*

Let us look at it a little more closely. It is a large cavernous chamber with two smaller ones on the right, in one of which the wall-plaster is almost intact. The grotto, entered under a huge overhanging rock, is shaped like a horseshoe, and in its principal chamber measures sixty feet by nineteen. The eastern end stands quite open, and frames a lovely view of the Salernian Gulf and the Siren Isles. Round the inner end, the walls of which are in their natural rocky state, runs a semicircular daïs with reticulated tufa facing, twelve feet broad and four feet high, with a lower one in front of the same width, but half a foot lower, to which what was once a staircase leads in the centre. In the middle of the back wall is a small recessed chamber or shrine, with a smaller aperture on the right reached by twelve steps. That it was a hypæthral shrine is evident from the fact that in front of the lower daïs, in the long axis of the cave, is a circular cavity four feet six inches in diameter, where once

* Representations of the Leontica, or peculiar Mithraic rites, have been found on ancient altars in Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire and Cheshire. The monuments of the cult may be studied in the works of Von Hammer and Layard.

stood perhaps an altar, with a drain for the sacrificial blood.* The position of this was such that at certain times the beams of the rising sun would fall exactly upon it. The cavern has been left in its rough state so far as regards the roof, which varies in height from twenty-five to fifty feet, and is evidently a natural formation enlarged or adapted for the purposes of worship by the addition of limestone and tufa walls, with well-cut reticulated faces, and of a vaulted arch, resting on a foundation of rubble abundantly cemented with an adamantine mortar.

Though the present appearance of the cave is desolate enough, many relics of its former uses have been unearthed and carried away, and many more, no doubt, lie buried. On every side are signs of a vast natural subsidence, and of a destruction which it is difficult to ascribe to the hand of man. Huge fragments of earth and rock, with masonry adhering, lie in the valley in front of the east entrance, where once, as we may suppose, stood an imposing portal to the temple. In place of the throngs of worshippers laden with offerings, no footfall now stirs the echoes of this

* Various authors (copying one from another) assert that this altar is in the British Museum. It is not so, and never has been.

silent solitary shrine but that of the fisherman or the quail-catcher; the only music one is likely to hear is the dismal screech of the *zampognaro co' pupi*, the delight and solace of the wandering goat-herd.

Close at hand have been found many vessels of terra-cotta, human bones, sepulchral urns, a statuette of Mithras, and a pathetic Greek inscription in memory of a youth who is supposed to have been attached to the court of Augustus. I give the infelicitous Latin version, printed by Martorelli in his 'De Regia Theca Calamaria,' ii. 5, 4:

'Qui Stygiam incolitis regionem, dæmones almi,
Excipite intra Orcum me quoque ter miserum:
Parcarum haud fato raptum me, sed violenta
Morte improvisa ex vi superum haud merita.
Jam cumulabat sat multo me munere Cæsar,
Cum patres a spe et me quoque repulerit.
Et non quindenus non se vicenus et annus
Volverat, infelix haud jubar intueor.
Nomen mi est Hypatus, sed et illud adhuc rogo fratrem,
Patresque ingemere haud ulterius miseros.'

The original epitaph, as given by Mangoni, I venture thus to paraphrase:

Dread powers, in murky Stygian shores who roam,
Thrice wretched me receive into your home:
Me snatched ere life's allotted race is spea,
By death resistless, swift, unmerited.
The hand that me with ample honours crowned
Hath dealt to sire and son this hopeless wound.



BASSO-RELIEVO OF MITHRAS, SAID TO HAVE BEEN FOUND IN CAPRI.

To face p. 83.

Ere thrice five years their finished course have run,
I, hapless child of sorrow, leave the sun.
My name is Hypatus—dear brother mine,
And weeping sire, I bid ye not repine.

Mangoni and others give long descriptions of a basso-relievo, illustrating the worship of Mithras, and supposed to have been found here. But such grave doubts have recently been thrown upon its connection with Capri, that, not having seen it, and not knowing where it is, I think it best to say nothing about it.

Two or three hundred yards beyond the Grotto of Mithras, at the point above the fine Arco Naturale, our walk in this direction comes to an end, and we make our way back to the piazza by the path between the Telegrafo and San Michele.

On the south-west of the town a plateau, immediately under the top of the Castiglione, was chosen of old as the site of an imperial villa, at which Hadrawa began his work of excavation. Here he found, at a depth of a dozen feet, a house with five rooms *en suite*, a loggia sixteen feet long, and many miscellaneous objects, including a white marble early Greek vase, with finely worked handles, and weighing five hundredweight. Upon its sides were bassi-relievi of a sacrificial scene, a figure with musical pipes in his mouth, and two others with torches, while a fourth is laying

upon an altar something that looks like a wreath. He found also a marble pavement of excellent workmanship, set in geometrical figures ingeniously interlaced, designed, perhaps, by the mathematician Thrasyllus, who was among the suite of Tiberius. It was taken to the new palace of La Favorita at Portici, through the court-yard of which now runs the highroad from Naples to Salerno. Another object found was a basso-relievo of a winged Victory offering a libation, with a portrait of Tiberius crowned; a genius, or priest (full length), holding a platter in the act of sacrifice; and the fragments of a hand playing on a cithern, all very beautifully finished. Hadrawa gives a drawing of this, as well as of two marble children's heads—one crying, the other smiling—both admirably done; also of a cameo portrait of the handsome Germanicus, which was presented to the Empress Catharine of Russia. Another broken cameo, containing only the shoulder-piece of a cuirass, with stars and a winged Victory, is thought by some to have been part of the effigy of Julius Cæsar; it was given to Tischbein, the painter friend of Goethe.

In the same place were unearthed a number of lamps and 'mattoni' with inscriptions (most of which passed into the possession of Sir W. Hamil-

ton), pictures and fine stucco work, conduit-pipes for cold and hot water, with furnaces for heating. Among the inscriptions was one, now at the Villa Cesina, of which the translation runs: 'Theano (daughter) of Ænacus, farewell!' and another meaning 'Athanodoros (son) of Agesandros of Rhodes made (this).'

The top of the Castiglione (750 feet) is crowned by a picturesque castle standing on earlier foundations, and built as a defence against the Saracens, with a chapel and hermitage added in later times. From the foot of the hill to that of San Michele may be traced here and there the remains of a cyclopean freestone wall, which must have rendered the eastern end of the island absolutely impregnable; now it is only here and there that a few blocks of this massive unmortared line of defence can be observed.

Confining ourselves still to the eastern end, another grand walk may be taken by passing through the covered way in the corner of the piazza by the Municipio, and following a walled track through gardens and vineyards, past the chapel of La Croce (or San Michele), where is the entrance to the hill of San Michele, the private property of Prince Caracciolo. On the dominating summit stood in Roman times what must have

been a large and handsome palace, scarcely inferior to the Villa Jovis, but of which a detailed description on paper would be dull and unintelligible. A winding road, eighteen feet wide, constructed on arches, seems to have led upwards along the hill to twenty-one rooms or cisterns (now used as stalls and store-rooms), each twelve feet square, which stood in a line looking out towards the south; at the back of these were many others, facing the bay, all the floors of which were found covered with volcanic black sand. On a quadrangular esplanade above, 230 feet by 100, stood the villa itself, one of the rooms of which, on the east side, was for many years used as a chapel, where a festival was held annually in honour of the archangel. The even dark-red layers of brickwork are still in splendid condition; but the whole building suffered greatly at the beginning of this century, when both French and English pulled everything about in order to construct their forts, and spirited away many ancient treasures. Many marbles and vases have, however, been found, as well as a large quantity of coins marked with the imprint of King Pyrrhus. Vegetation of amazing luxuriance now covers the whole site—ivy, brambles, capers, wolf's-milk, fennel, figs, vines, and a hundred varieties of tendrils and grasses and mosses and creepers

wreathe and veil the handiwork of man. Looking eastward from the top of the hill, this end of the island presents the appearance of a natural fortress, with the heights of Santa Maria, Telegrafo, and the Castiglione, with San Michele itself, standing at the four corners like bastions, each rising sheer out of the sea, and inaccessible from it by any ordinary pair of legs.

Descending again to La Croce, a quarter of an hour's gradual ascent brings us to the Faro, which, after the manner of Swiss waterfalls, has been so shut in that the only access lies through a little *buvette*. A few steps through the garden lead up to the remains of what was once a Faro or light-house, the twin sea-mark with that on the Punta di Campanella, rivalling not only the Pharos of Alexandria, but, as Statius records, the very moon herself:

> '*Teleboumque domus trepidis ubi dulcia nautis*
> *Lumina noctivagæ tollit Pharus æmula lunæ.*'

Pliny speaks of it as 'nocturnis ignibus cursum navium regens,' and Suetonius, the Roman Pepys, informs us that a few days before the death of Tiberius, as he lay shrieking and groaning in the villa of Lucullus at Misenum, the lighthouse was overthrown by an earthquake. As we know that it was again in use in the reign of Domitian, it

must have been rebuilt, and again thrown down in more recent times. All that is now left forms an irregular square, with sides forty feet long and fifty high. At the base on the south lies a huge bramble-covered fragment fallen from the top, with indications of an internal staircase. In 1750 some leadwork was found here with the name of M. Aurelius on it, and in 1804 Hadrawa made excavations which resulted in finding an underground staircase of squared stones, leading to a lower story containing a great quantity of ashes, a mixture (according to Professor Poli's analysis) of all sorts of things. A more valuable find was a very delicately-worked basso-relievo of terra-cotta, representing Crispina and Lucilla, wife and sister of the Emperor Commodus, in a suppliant attitude and with dishevelled hair. He also brought to light a sculptured faun, a graceful Doric capital, a terra-cotta lacrimatory, and a broken sepulchral monument with the inscription ταυρικες ταιου χαιρε.

A few yards eastwards from the base of the Faro is a lofty point of rock known as the Salto, from which, as I have already mentioned, in moments of merciless caprice or revengeful hate, Tiberius was said now and again to hurl his unfortunate subjects. If by chance the sensibilities of the Emperor, who was nothing if not a man of sentiment, were

at all jaded, he could at any time give them a fillip by popping an islander or a courtier over this 'lover's leap,' and could thus create a fine poetic contrast to the calm loveliness of the scene around him. A few years ago a misguided jackass, love-crossed or thistle-wearied, took the fatal leap, displacing 750 feet of atmosphere with neck outstretched, fore-legs wide apart, tail at an angle of 90°, and terror in every hair. He never spoke again.

At the Salto you may, if you wish it, see now and then a performance of a bastard *tarantella*. Gentle lotos-lover, have you ever seen a *tarantella?* I saw one danced the other night as an interlude in the hymeneal festivities of a worthy baker and his bride; and I will give you the best idea I can of what you may see any day for yourself in Capri. As a stranger admitted into the charmed circle of wedding guests, it would be impertinent for me to make any hostile criticisms upon a performance which evidently was a source of unbounded delight to all who took part in it, and I will strive to confine myself to bare description, premising only that in the unsophisticated ways of Capriote man and maid the *tarantella* is looked upon as an integral part of the marriage ceremonies, and it is open to conjecture whether some of them would not prefer rather to forego the more strictly ecclesi-

astical function than be deprived of the time-honoured *ballata.*

Imagine a room twenty feet square, with the smallest of windows, on the broad stone sill of which high overhead stands a dispirited-looking oil lamp that battles with the young May moon outside, and casts a sickly glare and an evil smell in upon the company of some forty souls, who are perched upon rickety chairs round the walls, each chair containing for the most part two occupants (not counting fleas). In one corner sit the leading lady and gentleman of the piece; the former, who is—well, out of her teens, is attired in a gown of modest gray stuff, with a flowing muslin veil and orange-blossoms. Her twin soul wears a suit of sombre black and an air of easy composure as he sucks at a dead cigar. Perhaps he looks a little silly, but far less so than a trembling British bride-groom, who, with one hand furtively reducing to fragments the ruins of a dyspeptic roll, and his eyes fixed in a wooden stare on a dish of tipsy-cake, lisps out faint nothings in the broken and smothered accents of a moribund criminal. The cockney, in a high state of civilization and a strait-waistcoat of unmitigated misery, languishes during the progress of his wedding feast; but the untutored Capriote, casting care to the winds, abandons him-

self to wild and uproarious bliss. After awhile, during which sweetmeats are handed round (with which it is *en règle* to pelt the bride at odd moments) and glasses of Capri *rosso* (redolent of posterior pains and penalties), the music is struck up. The expansive labourings of a fat *organetto* or accordion blend heavily with the mimic popping thunder of the *tamburello;* and in another moment the happy pair begin the dance, together with the bride's sister and the best man.

The *tarantella*, says Stamer in his amusing 'Dolce Napoli,' is nothing but a pantomimic love-story, of which the groundwork is 'Amantium iræ amoris integratio est'—

'The falling out of faithful friends renewal is of love.'

Imagine a choreographic depiction of the alternating agonies and transports of a badly-bitten pair after this fashion: Act 1. Enraptured gaze, coy side-look, gallant advance, timid retreat, impassioned declaration, supercilious rejection, piteous supplication, softening dubitation, oblation of worldly goods, gracious acceptance, frantic jubilation, maidenly resignation. Act 2. Petting, wooing, billing, cooing; a smash on the tambourine followed by jealous accusation, sharp recrimination, manly expostulation (a scourge of bass

chords on the *organetto*), shrewish aggravation (bleatings *in altissimo*), angry threatening, summary dismissal, Strephon fuming, Amaryllis pouting. Act 3. Reaction, approximation, explication, exoneration, reconciliation, osculation; winding up with a grand *pas de circonstance*, setting forth confidence unbounded, harmony, peace, and love *ad sæcula sæculorum*. The musical or (to keep well within the mark) the instrumental accompaniment is sometimes supplied by the local Strauss, who brings on to the scene an orchestra consisting of castanets; a *siscariello*, or fife; a *tricavala*, formed of three wooden mallets tied together so as to make a rattle; the inevitable *tamburello*, or tambourine (sometimes replaced by the *organetto*); and a *spassa-pensiero*, or Jew's harp. To these are added in Sorrento the *puti-puti*, a tin pot covered with skin, and with a bit of cane stuck through the centre, and the *sega-vaiasse*, a wooden saw and a split stick used as a bow and fiddle.

Above the accompaniment floated at intervals the vocal strains of a queer distraught kind of crooning ditty, the words of which (happily, as I have understood) were wholly unintelligible. It began thus:

'Io songo venuto a candar'
Lu zito e a zita,
Songo venuto alla
Vosta chiammata.

Dio ve renne forza
E longa vite,
A guanno che vene
Nu masculo ù lato.'

The whole was sung to a melody that marched monotonously down in the key of A minor note by note from the dominant to the tonic, with each interval embroidered and disguised and knocked out of all recognition by appoggiaturas and acciaccaturas and grace-notes and twirling turns and tremolos, ending with a prolonged drawl on the keynote. The effect, taken as a whole (it never does to chew one's pills), was inspiriting, not to say deafening; and, added to the stamping of the *soccolas*, or brogues, on the stone floor, the sharp, quick cries of the dancers, the buzz of admiring criticism, and the frequent interjecting of *bravos* and *bravas*, it was about as bewildering as I can imagine the Handel festival would be in a coal-cellar. I gazed in amazement at the untiring agility of the performers, the scraps of reel and fandango, gavotte and war-dance all in one; and (I hope) I blushed unseen as I thought of the infamous parody,

'*Their soles did from their bodies fly.*'

Now and then, at the signal of a warning blast from the accordion, the two couples joined forces

and broke off into the whirling *tarascon*, and, after some fifteen minutes of perpetual motion, sat down amidst a burst of applause. Then came even a more imposing spectacle. *Da capo* was the word, and the whole thing was begun over again, but this time with only a brace of performers, one of whom was a slim and pensive *marinaio*, and the other the most massive female I remember ever to have seen. The passage of a camel through the eye of a needle would be a joke compared with the passing of that 'too, too solid' lump of flesh through any ordinary English doorway. The little room seemed to shrink into half its dimensions as she took the floor, 'teres atque rotunda,' portly and immense, with no woeful want of wilful waist, and with as little 'linked sweetness long drawn out' as there was in the strains to which she danced. But, for all that, she was far and away the best dancer of the lot; and if behemoth in his native swamps seeks ever to fascinate his equal half by a coy and graceful *pas de seul*, then hath he no mean rival in this incarnation of Balzac's 'embonpoint flottant.' By mere efflux of time, the gay revel was at last concluded—at least, I presume that it was; for when Signora Cantara Butta sank on to the edge of a chair, looking as 'fresh as paint' after ten

minutes' posturing, to which 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay' is child's play,

> *'The wedding guest*
> *Here beat his breast,'*

and sought the sweet influences of Pleiades in the soft spring night outside, recalling as I strolled homeward a much more tuneful orchestra that I once heard, and a much prettier dance that I once watched, long ago, under the palms of Fiji. The truth is, there is not much more poetry to be extracted from a Capriote *tarantella* nowadays than from an old tin pot. As I made my parting salutations to the bride, and, with the presaging sympathy of 'one who knows,' grasped the tawny hand of her fellow-sufferer, I murmured in choice Tuscan what I trust they understood to be an aspiration for their lifelong felicity. May they keep pure hearts and clean hands! the husband especially, seeing that he makes my daily bread.

The Salto is separated by a few yards only from the entrance to what Pliny calls the 'Tiberii arcem principis,' or Villa Jovis. Whatever may be our opinion with regard to the vexed question of the true localities and designations of the twelve royal villas, it needs but a glance to see that these ruins before us represent what once must have been an edifice second to none in the island. Dr.

Gennaro Arcucci was the first, at the beginning of this century, to attempt the task of fixing precisely the sites of the imperial residences mentioned by Tacitus. Hadrawa made out the following list: 1, Villa Jovis; 2, San Michele; 3, Mitromania Valley; 4, Tragara; 5, Camerelle; 6, Certosa; 7, Castiglione; 8, Piccola Marina; 9, Truglio, or Fontana; 10, Aiano; 11, Campo Pisco; 12, Palazzo a Mare. Romanelli, a few years later, committed himself to no definite opinion; while Mangoni strikes out of Hadrawa's list Nos. 3, 5, 8, and 11, and substitutes others at Capodimonte, Damecuta, Monticello, and Linaro (Timberino), all in Anacapri. It may, however, be taken as certain that it is now impossible to fix either the names or the sites of those edifices, in the construction of which the annalist affirms that Tiberius was immersed to the detriment of his own interests in Rome.*

I have already alluded to the names that he is supposed to have given to his villas; but that each one was placed under the protection of a special deity is, though not in itself an improbable supposition, founded upon nothing more weighty than an *ipse dixit* of the Jena Professor Lipsius, who, three hundred years ago, jumped at such a con-

* 'Sed tum Tiberius duodecim villarum nominibus et molibus insederat.' Tacit., *Ann.*, iv. 67.

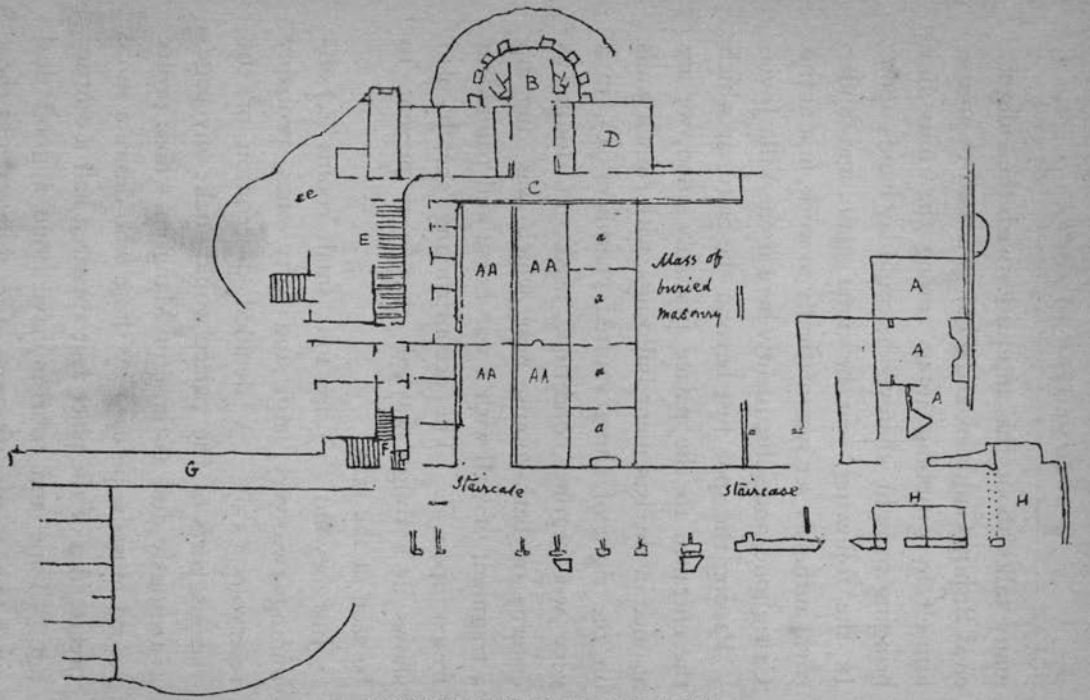
clusion in consequence of what he found in Tacitus. Suetonius plainly says that after the death of Sejanus the Emperor did not for nine months go outside the walls of the villa 'quæ vocatur Jovis,' so we need have no doubt about this one on Santa Maria; but as for the others, without an exception, all is mere guesswork.

It is too often forgotten that Augustus was in Capri before his successor, and that in many parts of the island, as has already been mentioned, he erected villas, which Tiberius may have enlarged and glorified. However this may be, the Villa Jovis, both from its commanding position and its vast extent, must have been a truly imperial retreat, half fortress, half palace, with theatre or temple, and innumerable rooms for the Court, and quarters for soldiers and slaves and officials of every degree. Excavations were begun here in the reign of Charles III. by Dr. Luigi Giraldi, of Ferrara, and continued by Hadrawa and Signor Giuseppe Feola, director of antiquities in Capri. Hadrawa, in 1786, had accompanied King Ferdinand to Capri on the occasion of a visit paid with the double purpose of shooting quails and inquiring into certain alleged grievances which the island folk had against their Governor. The King during his stay of twelve days (in the Palazzo Canale) had

many talks about the antiquities with the enlightened Bishop Gamboni, and Hadrawa used to amuse himself by grubbing about among the ruins and bringing to light whatever he could lay hands upon. In the following year he came again, and under royal authority set systematically to work, first at the Castiglione, and subsequently here at the Villa Jovis.

Passing the spot just beyond the Salto, at which the entrance to the palace probably stood, we are at once in the basement buildings, with ruined walls on the right of three vaulted chambers (A), in a very woe-begone condition, used, no doubt, as cisterns or bath-rooms, near which was dug up a fragment of wall with a war-horse well painted in fresco upon it. The accompanying sketch-plan shows in a rough way all that is at present to be seen of the villa.

Just beyond (A) are four small rooms (a) adjoining two very large and lofty ones, probably reservoirs (AA). A detailed description of the various parts of the palace would make my pages as tediously dull as those of Mangoni, whose prolix record must be perused by those who desire a more precise idea of the place as it appeared half a century ago. Time and tourists have done a good deal since then to modify some of its features, and those naturally the most conspicuous and attractive.



SKETCH PLAN OF VILLA JOVIS, CAPRI.

To face p. 98.

Broken walls, crumbling arches, masses of rubbish, fragments of marble and mosaic pavements, with here and there a forlorn patch of faded wall-colouring, meet the eye on every side. In some instances the shape and dimensions of the various rooms are well defined; in others everything is left to conjecture. Among the most interesting remains are those of a very large building (B), surrounded on the south-east side by two parallel semicircular walls, with remnants of five or six massive bastions or pilasters standing nine feet apart, and forming portions of small chambers radiating from a common centre. They were approached by what must have been a noble paved and painted corridor (C), 126 feet long by 11 wide, now grass-grown and open to the sky, leading at the end to a chamber 25 feet square (D), wherein were found two marble puteals, or well-heads, ornamented with representations of the seasons. Here also was found the well-known marble basso-relievo, 20 inches long, of a girl with a torch in her hand riding a high-stepping courser, with an elderly man seated behind her. A slave is showing them the way to an oak-tree, under the shade of which is a truncated garlanded column, upon which stands a youth holding a platter or basket. The piece is now in the Naples Museum,

and is described somewhat apocryphally as representing 'Tiberius and his mistress riding the same horse, and led by a slave to the statue of Priapus.'

At the bottom of the steps (E), leading up to the plateau (ee) on the summit of the hill, a broad marble staircase of thirteen steps leads down westwards to a landing (F), from which nine more steps bring us to a corridor (G), 83 feet long by 6 feet wide, with black-and-white mosaic pavement almost intact. On a lower level nearer the palace entrance, and on the western side of the path, are remains of other ruins (H), with a pavement designed like the backbone of a fish, and corridors leading to underground parts which can only be partially explored by the help of candles. Giraldi here brought to light the beautiful pavement which has been relaid in front of the high altar in the cathedral, as well as many valuable marbles and columns, which were transferred to the same place and to the Church of S. Salvatore. Here also were unearthed the gems that now glitter in the mitre and pectoral cross of San Costanzo's effigy, a lapis lazuli pillar 5 feet high and 10 inches wide (sold to an Englishman for forty scudi), bronze candelabra, vases, and cameos. Possibly further excavation might reveal fresh treasures, but the hand of the spoiler has

probably carried off the bulk of what was really valuable. My own attempt at excavating had no adequate results. After digging to some little depth in what I thought a likely spot, I came upon a fragment of the *Daily Telegraph* containing an account of a dynamite outrage; so I did not continue my researches.

On the edge of the cliff stands the chapel of S. Maria del Soccorso, containing a handsome altar, given by the Argentine Italians, with the inscription: 'Capreenses in Argentina degentes dicarunt, 1885.' Hard by dwells a hermit (so called) who keeps a visitors' book (what a pity he cannot show us the Emperor's!) and a glass of wine always on tap, and who looks a more honest fellow than one of his predecessors, who, finding a gold image among the ruins, fled from the island by the next boat, and lived happily ever afterwards on the fruits of iniquity. And yet after all, if it did not belong to him, whom did it belong to? I hope I may never meet the same temptation.

And now, as the sun is fast dropping behind Ischia, I linger for a few moments, as I stand a thousand feet above the sea,* and cast my eyes around upon one of the most sublime views in Europe. Look-

* Manfredi, of the R.N. Hydrographical Service, ascertained the height of the cliff, in 1883, to be 340 metres.

ing over the island there is the lofty eastern front of Monte Solaro, with the castled crag of Barbarossa, and nearer the Telegrafo and its twin Tuoro Piccolo (the *taurubulæ* of Statius),* the Castiglione and the round terraced San Michele, with its dismantled ruin dominating the little valley of Moneta (Juno) and the Marina Grande. Looking across the bay to the mainland, the eye takes in at one sweeping glance the academy of Cicero, the grave of Virgil, the birthplace of Tasso, and the whole stretch of the lovely *costiera di levante* from Monte Circello to Pæstum. Away to the north-west curves the 'littus Veneris'—pleasant shore of Venus—with Baiæ and Pozzuoli and Posilipo, and the tiny isle of Nisida and the long low line of Procida, and 'stately Ischia, Circe's lair,' and Ponza, a soft shadow on the utmost horizon,† and the far Capo Circello, whence St. Peter's dome is visible, guarding the Gaetan gulf. Due north lies 'dolce Napoli,' with her far-reaching swarming suburbs, hanging like a fringe of squalor on the skirts of a comely queen.

* Silv., iii. 1, 128. Is there here any hint of the 'taurus' of Mithraic worship?

† It was in Ponza that Pope Sylverius was starved to death by Belisarius, a crime expiated by the erection of the church of S. Maria in Trivia, the parish church of the Quirinal.

'*Parthenope, cui mite solum trans æquora vectæ*
Ipse Dionæâ monstravit Apollo columbâ.'

The picture is framed by the Falernian ridges —clothed with the choicest vineyards of Italy— the long range of the Samnite Apennines, backed by the ramparts of Lucania. Nearer at hand soars the huge mass of Vesuvius, with Resina (covering Herculaneum) and Torre del Greco and Torre Annunziata nestling like too trustful maidens at the feet of a tyrant lord.

'*A wreath of light-blue vapour, pure and rare,*
Mounts, scarcely seen against the bluer sky,
In quiet adoration, silently,
Till the faint currents of the upper air,
Dislimn it, and it forms, dissolving there,
The dome, as of a palace, hung on high
Over the mountain.'

Nearer still are the fantastic peaks of Sant' Angelo, that rise above Sorrento, with half a score of sun-bathed hamlets gleaming on their lower slopes, and striped with many a patch of vine and olive that lose themselves in the barren headland of the Punta Campanella, where once Ulysses reared his temple to Minerva.* Southwards the three rocky

* Here ancient mariners were wont to pour a libation to the goddess :

'*Prima salutavit Capreas, et margine dextra*
Sparsit Tyrrhenæ Mareotica vina Minervæ.'

Statius, Silv., ii. 2.

islets of the Sirens, looking from here like one, seem to float on the bosom of the Salernian gulf, with many a deep indented bay and jutting headland that lead the eye across thirty miles of blue water to where malaria-stricken Pæstum, city of Neptune, gleams dimly at the foot of Monte Alburno, with the Licosian cape beyond, from which they say you can see the distant mass of fiery Etna.

Such is the prospect in black and white; but only those who have seen it for themselves can fill in the sketch, or have any idea of the effects of sun and shadow, the magic melting of the prismatic tints, the witching brightness and transparency of the atmosphere. As I try to drink it all in, I am bewildered by memories of Ulysses and the enchantress, Cimmerian gloom and Phlegræan fires, the wars of the giants, and the graceful legends which first drew hither the wandering sons of Hellas. I remember that here the rugged Roman was first confronted by the culture of Greece, and captive Greece led captive her conqueror. Near at hand are the plains in which the flower of Carthage fell prone before the wasting breath of luxury in days 'antequam Vesuvius mons ardescens faciem loci verteret,' when as yet yonder yawning crater had belched forth nothing more terrible than a torrent

of servile rebels under the sway of a Thracian bondsman.

It looks the very home of tranquillity on this calm May evening as the sun is setting in splendour of rose and daffodil; and across the sky, that is streaked with all the tints of a dying dolphin, there lies a marvellous archipelago of cloud isles, torn bannerets of amber and crimson and gold, of richest maroon and palest green, and carnation that dies into delicate rose. By little and little the glittering marble of the bay fades into sullen lavender, and then with a swiftness that numbs one by a sudden sense of loss the 'great lamp of the world' is quenched to our seeming, and the purple peak of Ischia deepens into azure gloom.

With drooping lids the sweet day dying lay
  On Capri's walls; round broad Solaro's height
  Gathered the velvet mantle of the night;
Far down the foam-bells tinkled in the bay
Like Siren music; many a league away,
  O'er dead Salerno's waters, pearly white
  The shrine of Neptune glimmered in the light,
That like a dead rose hung o'er Ischia gray.
Then softly Eve, with coronal of stars
  Atremble, from her dusky chamber crept
    O'er Angelo and Massa's lonely crest,
And breathing low, lest 'neath yon golden bars
  The sea-god waken, kissed him as he slept,
    And laid a dainty jewel on his breast.

CHAPTER V.

HIGHLAND.

'Lord! who would live turmoiled in a court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?'

BOUND now for Anacapri, I turn westwards past the convent of Santa Teresa and halt at the old Greek cemetery under the Castiglione, towards the broad front of Monte Solaro. Here, on a cemented floor, a large number of plain brick graves were unearthed, with bones of unusual size. Each body had two nails placed on its head, an imperial bronze coin in its mouth, and a terra-cotta vase at the feet. Not far off, a cup with the figure of a satyr on it was dug up, as well as some glossy black vases of terra-cotta, one of them worked with the yellow figure of a girl. Another relic was a large stone with the inscription (in Greek) 'Gnæus Me(g)acles P(atronus) Pestano(rum),' which may be taken as recording the purchase of a plot of ground. The

slab was used for many years as a threshold stone to the Palazzo Canale, but was purchased by the late Mr. Wreford, the correspondent of the *Times* newspaper, and is now in the loggia of the Villa Cesina.

A few yards farther and we are at the Parate (so called from the quail-nets),* overlooking towards the south one of the choicest vineyards in Capri. All the world has heard of the excellence of 'vino di Capri,' and it does not belie its fame. Full-bodied and generous, one need ask for no better drink. I have already hinted, however, that there is both bad and good 'rosso,' excellent 'bianco' as well as an execrable ditto that cannot be trusted to make glad the heart of man. If Capri wine as purchased in a Naples hotel be usually, as it certainly is, a doctored stuff about as suitable for the system of a wandering stranger as the 'aqua tofana' with which the playful pontiff Alexander VI. used to physic his Cardinals, it is by no means a certainty that even on the island itself you will always be treated to the real unsophisticated juice of the grape. The wine is some-

* On each slope of the Parate, between the two Marinas, is a favourite place for catching quails. The word *parate* is applied to the whole stretch of the nets when outspread upon the poles.

times not only drunk too new, but it is made carelessly; in consequence of which it is abominably rough, and both smells and tastes of the sulphur which is sprinkled over the vines from the perforated nozzle of a huge pair of bellows, as a defence against the dreaded phylloxera.

From this point two rocky paths diverge, one leading down to the Piccola Marina, with its pretty secluded little strand, and the other to the so-called Fern Grotto or Grotta dell' Arco, a huge cave in the broad face of the mountain. It is by taking the path to this grotto that we can observe the drastic effects of the convulsion of nature which, occurring probably since the time of the Roman Emperors, has made a vast change in the contour and general aspect of the island at this point. On every side gigantic boulders lie scattered about in the middle of cup-like depressions, in many instances with their sides and faces as fresh-looking and unworn by the stress of years as if they had fallen but yesterday, forbidding the idea that the disturbance which rent them 'from the mountain's brow' could have taken place at any very remote date. There is no spot on the island more interesting than this to the geologist; but since 'quot homines tot sententiæ,' and having no data for exact knowledge, I can only pluck a wild-flower

from the nature-woven carpet at my feet, and pass on.

The Grotta dell' Arco is large and lofty, and has yielded some interesting relics of prehistoric times, including many small objects worked in an obsidian that is identical with that of the Ponza Islands, and fragments of pottery suggestive of Phœnician craft. Here also Dr. Cerio unearthed human bones split for the purpose of extracting the marrow, and lying mixed up with relics of snail-shells and other remains of what may have once formed the food of the cave-dwellers. If these may be explained by the presence of a primitive anthropophagous race, it does not seem beyond the borders of reason to imagine that a clue might thus be discovered to the identification of Capri with the isle of the Sirens, whose name has from time immemorial been given to the tongue of land just below this grotto, and who may possibly have been women who, when the family larder grew bare, were in the habit of swimming out into the little bay off the Piccola Marina, and alluring foolish mariners to the delights of what proved to be but a baleful 'cupboard love.' Palinurus, the man at the wheel, went overboard, as we all know, in the Gulf of Salerno, off the cape that still records the

mishap, about fifty miles south of Capri. Says Virgil:

> *'Jamque adeo scopulos Sirenum advecta subibat,*
> *Difficiles quondam multorumque ossibus albos,*
> *Tum rauca assiduo longe sale saxa sonabant.'*

Whether those

> *'Bleached bones of mouldering men that sleep'*

lay at the foot of this Grotta dell' Arco in Capri; or on what Strabo calls the 'insulæ desertæ atque saxosæ,' now known as Li Galli, or the Siren Isles; or (as Suetonius thinks) on the Sorrentine headland, is a matter that admits of much discussion and no certainty.

Retracing my way back to the main road towards Anacapri, I skirt the mountain by easy gradients that bring me up at each step to views of ever-increasing loveliness, along a road that for two-thirds of its length (two miles) is blasted out of the face of the solid rock. Such was the difficulty of its construction, that at certain points the workmen, one of whom was dashed to pieces through a rotten rope, could only accomplish their task by being suspended in baskets from the cliff above. Now all is smooth and easy, and the commune of Anacapri is reached by a route which is second to none in Italy, and is in singular contrast with the ancient rock-hewn way, portions of which



ON THE STAIRWAY, ANACAPRI.

To face p. 111.

are still used by the country folk. One feels half inclined to regret the demolition of the 700 or 800 steps that have been trodden by so many feet in bygone ages; yet the pedestrian who is a little thick in the wind, or just a trifle shaky in the legs, will find cause to bless the more modern path.

At a point immediately below the castle of Barbarossa the new road cuts through the ancient stairs which begin near the church of San Costanzo, and lead up past the dismantled chapel of Sant' Antonio to the height of Capodimonte, just beneath which is a mediæval gateway known as La Porta. Here we get a superb view, comparable to that from the theatre at Taormina, or the Epipolæ in Syracuse. Beneath lies a rich valley stretching upwards from the silver-fringed beach to where the town of Capri runs down in driblets among lemon groves to the water-washed Marina. Nearer are the fertile flats of Aiano, and the shapeless ruins of the Palazzo a Mare lying in the exquisitely clear water, and the cliffs overhanging the Blue Grotto. Right in front, across eighteen miles of water, are Naples and her suburbs, and Vesuvius, along whose slopes

'*Cuncta jacent flammis et tristi mersa favilla;*'

while on the left lies the soft plateau of Anacapri, backed by the bold peak of Epomeo far away, and

the Littus Veneris; and on the right the soaring slope of Lo Capo, and the Sorrentine uplands and the range of Sant' Angelo.

At my back lie the ruins of the imperial villa of Capodimonte, under and around a ruined chapel. The site has been almost entirely destroyed by the wash of earth from the overhanging mountain, and is now for the most part concealed by vineyards. But there are fragments of excellent wall-colouring still to be seen, and a short time ago some elaborate pavements, columns and statues were brought to light, only, alas! to be carried off by the ubiquitous vandal.

Above Capodimonte rises the lofty crag which is crowned by the ruined castle dismantled by Barbarossa, the auburn-haired son of the Lesbian potter, a stronghold in which, if he ever lived in it, he could laugh his rival Andrea Doria to scorn, and whence, like an eagle from his eyrie, he could swoop down upon his prey.

'He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world he stands.

'The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;'
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.'

The arch-corsair has been credited with the

spoliation of many of the old treasures of Capri. If he laid hands on statues, images and bassi-relievi —unlawful for a Mohammedan to possess—he must have smashed them, which of course is quite possible. At the same time we may be sure that he looked more sharply after pieces-of-eight, and handsome slaves, and stout rowers than after mosaics and pretty curios. There are capital quarters in the castle for a picnic-party, and a rough way may thence be found along the northern side of the ridge to the hermitage of La Citrella and the top of Monte Solaro (1,920 feet). From the summit a fair path leads down to the oriental-looking village of Anacapri, with its little piazzas and convent and churches. In its six *casali* of Caprile, Boffe, Timpone, Porta, Filietto and Catena (where stood the earliest settlement in a long line of walled houses right under the mountain slope), there are few things of historical interest now visible to detain the stranger; but as a place of summer residence Anacapri possesses charms which it would be difficult to equal. Seen as I first saw it, looking down from the top of Solaro

> '*On an April day,*
> *In a lovely marriage of rain and ray,*'

surrounded by gardens bright with their new spring livery, it wears a look of the most fascinating

pastoral peace. Here, as all over the island, the orange-scented air, laden with a mysterious suggestiveness, seems alive with that uprising of invisible generations, that presence of effaced personalities, which is nowhere more insistent than in South Italy.

One's mental horizon is insensibly widened by coming face to face with men of whom one has read all one's life, and who seem here to take living form, and to walk in flesh and blood before the eyes of the imagination, amid what Paul Bourget calls so many 'sensations d'histoire, sensations d'art, sensations de nature.' Here, as yet, have not been heard the wailing accents of that bitter cry which goes up to Heaven from those out of whose lives the *fin de siècle* vandal is year by year snatching more and more of the gentle joy of living. Here you may sit under your own or somebody else's fig-tree, and ponder the 'consistent dignity of life,' as lived by the simple independent folk around you; and may cultivate to your heart's content the capacity of being happy alone with Nature in her sweetest mood—Nature, who with her merciful hand has here so covered up the past that you must dig deep down under the vine-roots if you would find any of the time-worn traces of man's handiwork. It is quite different at

the other end of the island, which is daily losing more and more of its pristine charm, and which, if not speedily swallowed up by an eruption from across the bay, where 'Ucalegon proximus ardet,' will in a figurative sense be turned upside down by the irruption of Berlin shopkeepers, who, satiated with the beery banalities of Potsdam, now rush hither during eight months of the year through the bowels of St. Gothard in an ever-increasing turgid stream, Herr Kaufmann and his attendant *hausfrau*. It is a hard matter to escape from them. Along the narrow winding walled lanes you hear a party of them crunching the air with severe consonantal force five minutes before they come in sight. There is not an hotel that does not echo their guttural utterances to an extent that renders life barely worth living. And when the threatened hotel, with four hundred rooms, shall rear its sacrilegious front on the top of the Castiglione, the cup of Capri will run over. Her youth was hectic, her middle age broken and troubled, and it seems hard to deny her rest in her old age.

The only balm that the lotos-eater can apply to his chafed spirit is that Capri does not willingly lend herself to Haussmannesque improvements. I have no doubt that before long there will be a funicular railway to the Villa Jovis, and a carriage-

road to the Blue Grotto ; but meanwhile I could take you, my reader, for a score of rambles between Lo Capo and Orica, in the course of which we would never set eyes upon a foreign face. I cannot tell you where they lie, for the topography of Capri makes it a difficult feat to direct a stranger to any one particular point. But I can tell you that if you want to find a beauty spot, take the first lane anywhere in among the vines and olives, and, so long as you keep to the little winding path, and do not steal the grapes, or 'make hay' of the beans and potatoes and standing corn, you may roam whither you will, and steep your soul to the brim in the charm of the glad life around you.

This is especially true of the district lying round Anacapri village, in which numberless beautiful rambles may be taken. One of the most delightful leads past an extensive oak grove, through gardens and twisted olive stems, to the Punta Carena ; passing the Torre Matrita, from the tower of which you may get a superb view of Ischia, and the range of coast along the bay. Where shall you find a more enjoyable walk than the one to Migliari (Fravacini), with its fine view of the southern ramparts of the island, and the Faraglioni, and the Salernian Gulf? or to the windmill built by 'our friends the enemy' for the

grinding of their grain? or to the Rio, with its delicious bathing nook? or to Orica, the very name of which is redolent of old Greek memories? or to the sun-haunted plateau of Damecuta (= domus Augusti), across the slopes up which the French drove back the Maltese? or, farther, to the mediæval tower of Damecuta, and the Gradellè Fort on the cliffs over the Blue Grotto, where in the days of old was the landing-place of the Anacapri fishermen?

It needs a more cunning hand than mine to describe the beauty of such walks as these, leading as they do over ground full of interest, although the antiquities that meet the eye are few. We know that many Roman residences were built at this end of the island, and no wonder, for here, 800 feet above the sea, the air is as exhilarative as sparkling wine, and the face of Nature is wreathed in her most gracious smiles. Rosario Mangoni, as I have said, put four of the imperial palaces in the commune of Anacapri; and Feola has made out a list of not less than fourteen sites formerly occupied by villas of different sizes. The most wanton destruction has taken place of rich marbles and precious works of art. In many instances the peasants no sooner came upon buried relics than they smashed them and covered them

up again, to prevent the depredations of curio-hunters and the injury done by roving feet to their growing crops. The most interesting finds have been made near the Blue Grotto and at the palace of Damecuta, which, on account of its open, breezy situation, may have been a favourite one with the invalid Augustus. On the northern edge of the plateau, overlooking the water, stands the massive Torre Damecuta, built as a defence against the Saracens. South of this are two reservoirs, 140 feet by 16, with the cement work in perfect preservation, and still used to conserve water. At Pozzo Grande, not far off, is a cistern in three compartments, each 138 feet by 120, the sub-structure, according to Feola, of a large palace; tessellated pavements, bassi-relievi and columns having been found, some of which were taken to the chapel of S. Maria di Costantinopoli. At Monticello, between Anacapri and the windmill, were found two pavements, as well as a spacious room, the walls of which were still bright with red, blue and yellow plastering. But all this, and doubtless much more, is now entirely covered by vines and olives, the latter being now a less remunerative crop than of old through the formidable competition of the cotton-seed oil of America.

People live to a good old age hereabouts;

indeed, that anybody should ever die except from sheer ennui appears improbable, though some of the epitaphs in the little cemetery tell a different tale. Here is one cut upon the arms of a cross over the grave of a child :

'*Venni, viddi, e passai.*'

And here, close to the entrance, is the epitaph of Major Hamill :

'To the memory of John Hamill, a native of the county Antrim in Ireland, and Major in His Britannic Majesty's late regiment of Malta, who fell while bravely resisting the French invasion of Ana-Capri on the 4th of October, 1808, and whose mortal remains are deposited near to this place. This tribute of affection and respect has been placed by his kinsman and namesake, October 3rd, 1831. Requiescat in pace.'

At the cemetery gate are the following couplets, which, I am afraid, would have brought a gleam of anything but delight from the spectacles of John Conington. On the left hand one :

'*Disce subesse Deo qui legum monita spernis,*
Illius imperio tota natura subest.'

And on the right :

'*Siste pedem hic qui sis prudens exquire, viator,*
Pulvis et umbra sumus : disce subesse Deo.'

Hadrawa, in his description of Anacapri, waxes very enthusiastic: 'Among all the attractive views in the island, that of Anacapri is the most splendid. Thence all the islands in the gulf can be seen, as well as an indescribable variety of fertile ground in the form of innumerable cultivated spaces looking like artificial gardens. The air that one breathes at such an elevation is of the purest, and in its purity one can see the character of the people who live in it. Here all dwell in peace and tranquillity,* content with the little they possess, and passing their quiet daily life with perfect satisfaction. You find many old people with smiling countenances, of ninety or a hundred years, or even more. Their houses are always open, because they have no fear of thieves, but rather minister to each other's wants, and live in most complete harmony. A special characteristic of the inhabitants is their hatred towards the Capriotes, whom they despise as a vile, malicious, and fraudulent race. There are some of them, old men, who have never visited Naples in their lives, and (yet more astounding) some who have never been down the staircase to Capri, but remain contented only with their happy

* The more modern Anacapriotes have a bit of reputation for being 'inclinevoli a litigi,' which at least is good for Neapolitan lawyers.

life, the excellent air, the magnificent views, and the exceeding fruitfulness of the earth. One great evil is that they can find no water but what is in the cisterns ; whoever wants well-water must go down to Capri. The women make the journey, not caring three grains for the terrible staircase. The men of Anacapri are the best mariners, and as a rule the people are finer, more robust, and more daring than those at Capri. They have better boats both for rowing and sailing, and possess a *marinella* where they land, quite separate from that at Capri.'

The Anacapriote is absolutely an untaxed being so far as regards his consumption of the necessaries of life. In 1876 Capri, although not possessing the required number of inhabitants, was declared a *comune chiuso*, or close commune, and became liable to duties from which for many generations it had been exempt. The effect of this enactment almost takes one's breath away. While an inhabitant of the upper commune may consume every article of island produce without paying a sou for the privilege of doing so, his neighbour—or, rather, his hereditary foe down in Capri (a poorer man, taking him all round)—is bowed to the earth by such heavy *daziario* duties as would make our Wilts or Devon labourer

open his eyes. On every barrel of wine (say forty-five quarts) that is drunk in the commune of Capri the grower has to pay a tax of two francs thirty centimes, or four centimes a bottle (counting sixty bottles to the barrel). There is nothing that escapes except bread and vegetables and macaroni. Salt is so jealously guarded that the bringing up of a bottle of sea-water for cooking or any other purposes subjects the offender to a month in gaol. If you need the luxury of a saline tub in your own house, it is only to be enjoyed upon the order of a medical man. If a man has fattened a pig (a process to which the Capriote porker takes very kindly), and wishes to slaughter it, he must make a formal declaration to the authorities, who, if the proprietor of the said pig is a respectable householder, will take his word for the weight of the carcase: if not, an officer will drop in and superintend the weighing in person. You may take anything you like in the way of comestibles up from Capri to Anacapri with nothing but a passing glance from a pair of sharp eyes at the *uffizio daziario* at the limit of the commune. But woe betide you if, on your downward way to lunch at the Palazzo a Mare, you attempt to run the blockade in the opposite direction! Your *cocchiere*, who pockets a *soldo* for his treachery, knows that

as he passes the little red-tiled hut with contraband on board, a peculiar furtive jerk of his whip will bring on to the scene an official from whom there is no escape. Protestations will be as useless as were those of the unfortunate Capresi in 1876, who were thrown into a state of wild excitement by the reimposition of duties, but were forced to submit. So the Anacapriote can afford to suffer a little dearth of water now and then, in face of his exemption from such irritating and onerous enactments as his rival over the border groans under.

Anacapri may also fairly be considered to outdo its lowland neighbour by the possession of a patron and protector of far greater prestige than San Costanzo. Sant' Antonio da Padova, called *par excellence* Il Santo, occupies a very distinguished place in the calendar, and did many miraculous deeds which make him of Constantinople take a back seat.

Born of noble parents in Lisbon, and baptized by the name of Ferdinand, at the age of fifteen the future saint joined the order of the Augustinians, with whom he stayed until he was seized by a desire to join the Franciscan mission in Marocco, where many had been put to death by the infidels. Turning a deaf ear to the entreaties of his father, he departed amid the lamentations of

all who knew that he was destined by heaven to become 'un gran santo'; and being received with open arms by the brethren, was thenceforth known as Antonio. Shortly afterwards he set out for Marocco, where, on account of the climate, he made no long stay. Either the sun or the infidels made it too hot for him, and he took ship for Naples, whence he journeyed to Rome. From there he went on a preaching tour along the shores of the Adriatic, and converted many to the faith.

Walking one day along the port of Rimini, Antonio met a company of heretics, with whom he entered into a discussion about sacred things. They, however, only laughed at his admonitions, and so stirred his godly wrath that he turned to the sea and called in a loud voice upon the fishes all and several to come and listen to the truth. Instantly the surface of the water was stirred by an immense multitude of the finny tribes, who patiently gave a hearing to the exhortations of the saint. 'Come,' said he, 'O fishes, who have neither reason nor judgment, come and hearken to the words of your Creator! I command you, for the confounding of these unbelievers, to bow your heads in token of gratitude to Him who made you.' The effect was instantaneous. Well may his biographer exclaim in rapture, 'Oh! maraviglia

grandissima!' Every fish inclined its head and remained at the top of the water until bidden by the saint to 'turn and frisk again in the waves.' All who beheld the marvel were converted on the spot, except one free-thinking fellow, who a little while after met Antonio again, and demanded a further confirmation of the truth. 'Ask what sign you will,' was the reply; upon which the citizen proposed to the saintly man a test that was at once accepted. 'I have,' said this double-dyed Thomas, 'a mule, which I will starve for three days, at the end of which time I will take in my hand some oats, and you shall take one of your holy wafers: then, if the mule turns from the oats and adores the wafer, I promise to believe that what you preach is true.' 'Done!' said Antonio; 'but mind you keep your word!'

News of the proposed trial soon spread about the town, and at the appointed time seven thousand persons (it is as well to be accurate) gathered in the piazza to see the result. On one side stood the hungry mule and its master, on the other Antonio with the Host. The performance did not last long. 'Animal!' cried the saint, 'I command thee to adore thy Creator!' 'Eat, O my mule, and stay thy hunger,' responded the heretic, holding out the tantalizing sieve full of corn. Not a

bit of it. Running to the feet of Antonio, the mule fell on its knees, and bowed its head before the sacred mystery. In vain did the proprietor of the wayward beast try to worry its carnal appetite by dangling the oats close to its nose. The mule would have none of them until it was bidden by the saint to rise and eat.

Many other miracles were worked by Antonio in Ferrara and Padua and Lisbon. He made an infant of doubtful paternity open its mouth and proclaim that it was the proper offspring of a highly-respected Cavaliere; he raised a dead man to life, and bade him disclose the name of his murderer; restored a youth's amputated foot; turned some poisoned food, intended for his own gustation, into a heap of venomous serpents; discovered a stone in the body of a dead miser where his heart ought to have been; and many more marvels did he, as duly set forth by the cunning hands of Sansovino and Tullio Lombardo and Minelli and others on the walls of the Cappella del Santo in the vast basilica of Padua, where also is preserved a reliquary containing the tongue of the saint. In the adjoining Scuola del Santo are several frescoes by Titian, with probably a good deal of work in them from the hands of his pupils, representing the same and other evidences

of Sant' Antonio's varied capacities as a worker of miracles. He died near Padua on June 13, 1231, on which day his annual *festa* is held at Anacapri, and his wooden image carried in procession through the village amid the blare of trumpets and a blaze of squibs.

CHAPTER VI.

CHURCH AND CLOISTER.

'Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs.'

THE earliest knowledge we have of ecclesiastical affairs in Capri is of the time of Justinian I., when, either in 527 or 530, the island was handed over by a wealthy patrician to the monastery of Monte Cassino. Surius ('Vita S. Placidi,' 5 October) says that Tertullus, a noble and illustrious man, gave certain of his hereditary possessions to St. Benedict, including the isle of Capri, and thus may be looked upon as the actual introducer of the Christian faith. After a few years the monks built their church of St. Stephen, and asked Bishop Giovanni, of Sorrento, a prattling prelate who gave some trouble at the second Lateran Council, to come and consecrate it. On his refusal the Abbat Savino applied to Gregory the Great, who laid his commands on the Bishop to enable the

monks to carry out their wish of depositing certain relics of the virgin martyr St. Agatha in their church. 'Ideo,' said his Holiness, 'ad prædictum monasterium te jubemus accedere.' This extinguisher must have been put upon the Bishop somewhere in the last decade of the sixth century, inasmuch as Gregory ruled from 590 to 604, and Giovanni died in 596.

The erection of Capri into an ecclesiastical autonomy did not take place till the year 994, during the papacy of John XVI., when the first bishop was consecrated by Archbishop Leo of Amalfi, of which Mansone was at that time 'Dominus Dux,' or doge. The official record runs thus: 'Regnante Domino Mansone Amalphitano Duce. . . . igitur præfatus Leo primus archiepiscopus sanctæ sedis Amalphitanæ ecclesiæ una cum tota plebe sua et universo clero suæ diœcesis ordinavit. . . . Joannum, et eum in episcopum consecravit in insula Capritana.'* It is to be noted that the Capri bishop was not made a suffragan of the Surrentine prelates, but of those of Amalfi, to which republic the island then politically belonged, through the gift of Louis II.

The Benedictine chronicles give a list of successive bishops down to the year 1218, after

* *Istoria di Amalfi, per Francesco Pansa.*

which there is a break till 1254. Then follows a century and a half of rulers, an inconspicuous succession of Giovannis and Guglielmos and Giacomos—whose good has doubtless been 'interred with their bones'—until we light upon the name of a Giuliano Tommasao, a Minorite, who, having got himself into hot water between the rival Popes, so mended his ways that he was appointed in 1418 to the see of Capri, which he held for two years. Then the list runs on this wise: 1420, Giacomo da Capua; 1420, Giovanni Farvete or Faurenzio; 1433, Francesco; 1460, Martino, Vicar-General of Amalfi; 1474, Luca; 1485, Marco da Muro; 1491, Giovanni d'Aloisio, a Minorite from Aversa, who officiated at the coronation of the vicious Alfonso II. of Aragon; 1500, Raffaele Rocca, who was translated from Lucera, took part in the fifth Lateran Council, and died titular Bishop of Philadelphia; 1514, Eusebio Servita, Prior of S. Marcello in Rome; 1528, the learned and eloquent Agostino Falivonia, translated to Ischia in 1534, when he was succeeded by Angelo Barretta, Canon and Vicar-General of Naples; and 1538, Leonardo de Magistris, translated to Alessano, after holding the see for eleven years. In consequence of the poverty of the episcopal revenues, Pope Julius III. now attached

the bishopric to that of Mondragone, in the old Massic wine district, and placed the Spanish Alfonso de Val de Cabras over the two dioceses—an ill-judged arrangement which in a year or two was put an end to; Alfonso, on the re-division, retaining Capri till his resignation in 1555. After him came his fellow-countryman, Alfonso Sommario, and in 1564 the first, and so far as I know the only, native Bishop, Filippo Mazzola, who lies buried in the cathedral. Subsequent prelates were: 1583, F. Laparulo, a native of the neighbouring Massalubrense; and 1608, Traiano Bozzuto, a Neapolitan and an intimate friend of St. Philip Neri, the 'apostle of Rome.' This prelate, being treated with contumely by certain of his flock who ought to have known better, opposed rancour with a rare charity; and, feeling as others have felt since his time, that there are some accusations to which an innocent man may not stoop to make answer, contented himself with painting upon the ceiling of his room, in what is now the Municipio, the letters C. C. C. P., by which he would have understood 'Capitulum Capritanum contra Pastorem.' He died of apoplexy while preaching on the Feast of the Purification in 1626; to him succeeded Raffaele Rostro; in 1633 Loreto de Franchis, translated to Minori; and in 1635 Alessandro

Sibellia, who died after his consecration in Rome, before he could take possession of his see.

The next two names are, 1635, F. Antonio Blondo, of Cava, translated to Ortona on the Abruzzi coast; and in 1641 Paolo Pellegrini, who exploded a bombshell in the island by holding in the following year the first and only synod that has ever been held here, and one that proved, according to Monsignor Canale, a fruitful source of mischief down to the year 1860, through the dissension caused between the clergy of Capri and Anacapri by its constitutions. A further mischief, for which the Bishop cannot be held responsible, was the terrible plague that in 1656 was brought to Naples in a ship full of soldiers from Sardinia, and carried thence to Capri. The story runs that one Roberto Brancaccio, an exile in the island on account of certain rebellious proceedings of which he had been adjudged guilty, was betrothed to a noble Neapolitan girl, named Giulia Morcalda, who fell a victim to the plague, and whose parents forwarded to her lover a little packet containing a tress of her hair. They confided the souvenir to a Surrentine skipper, who brought it over during the night, and hove-to off Orica, waiting for an opportunity to evade the stringent regulations which forbade all communications with the mainland.

Being challenged by a Portuguese sentinel, he induced the man to receive the fatal missive at the end of a fishing-rod, by which means the dreaded pest was introduced, and the people perished by hundreds.

In 1683 succeeded one of the most illustrious rulers that the diocese of Capri has ever had, Monsignor Dionisio Petro, a noble Neapolitan belonging to the Order of the Celestines. It was this prelate who took an active part in the restoration of the cathedral, and adorned it with choir-stalls and a marble pavement, as is duly set forth in a tablet near the high altar, erected to his memory in 1706 by Gallo Vandeneynde, who had succeeded him in 1698. This Bishop Gallo was the rich prelate who bought and rebuilt the house at Fortino, now known as the Campo Pisco, and under whose rule the Teresian monastery at Anacapri was brought to its utmost splendour. After an active episcopate he resigned his see in 1732, and retired to Anacapri, where he spent the rest of his life in devotion and works of mercy; there is a large portrait of him in the cathedral. He was followed by Giovanni Maria de Laurentiis, a Carmelite, under whose régime was renewed with fresh vigour the ancient feud between the chapter of Capri and the Anacapriote clergy. He took

the severest measures in the interests of peace, but the flame of discontent was still burning fiercely at his death in 1751. The successor of De Laurentiis was F. Antonio Rocco, Dean of Sorrento, celebrated for his learning, and a close friend of S. Alfonso Maria di Liguori. His monument in the cathedral bears nothing but his name and the words 'Sibi suisque.'

The record now draws to its end. Nicholà Saverio Gamboni was consecrated on the death of Rocco in 1777, and held the reins of government until the political troubles at the beginning of this century, when he retired to Rome, where he lived for a short time in peace. In 1805 he was nominated, but never confirmed, to the bishopric of Vigevano, then a centre of the silk trade in the fertile plains of the Po, from which in 1807 he was elevated to the patriarchate of Venice, where he died four years afterwards. After the concordat, drawn up by Ferdinand and the Holy See in 1818, the bishopric of Capri was suppressed, and the ancient connection with its metropolitan at Amalfi being severed, it was absorbed into the diocese of Sorrento, in which jurisdiction it has ever since remained.

There is not, and never can have been, since it was a Christian isle, any lack of church accom-

modation for the good people of Capri, who, like Asia of old, can boast, at least, their seven churches: San Costanzo, in the *campagna* down by the Marina; San Stefano, the ex-cathedral and present *madre-chiesa*; SS. Salvatore, in the Certosa monastery; Santa Teresa (now San Luigi), in the suppressed convent under the Castiglione; and La Croce, on the southern slope of the hill of San Michele. At Anacapri there are Santa Sofia and San Michele, called commonly S. Nicholà or Paradiso. Nor did these by any means exhaust the number of ecclesiastical edifices formerly in use. In Anacapri there was the now roofless chapel of Sant' Antonio da Padova, on the ancient stairway near Capodimonte; the Chapel of the Annunciation a little higher up, on the site of the Roman villa; S. Maria a Citrella, on Monte Solaro; S. Maria di Catena, in the oldest part of Anacapri; S. Maria di Costantinopoli; S. Maria delle Grazie, in the Filietto quarter; S. Nicholà, adjoining the convent church of San Michele; and, lastly, in Capri town, the chapel of Sant' Anna. Of these, most are now disused and decaying; and in none, excepting, perhaps, SS. Salvatore and Santa Teresa, could there have been at any time any pretensions to architectural elegance.

The collegiate church of St. Stephen the protomartyr, was long the cathedral of the island diocese, and down to seventy years ago was presided over by a bishop who drew a considerable portion of his income from the quails, and was for that reason commonly spoken of as the *vescovo de' quaglie*, or 'bishop of quails.' The present edifice, on the site of a Benedictine hospice, an off-shoot of Monte Cassino, dates only from the year 1693, when it took the place of an earlier structure built by the monks when they were driven up from the Marina by the Saracens. A tablet over the sacristy records the date of consecration by Bishop Gallo thirty years later; and from another near the west door it appears that the earlier edifice was under the protection of San Costanzo as well as St. Stephen, and that the present one was erected on the foundations of its predecessors through the exertions of Dionisio Petro, a 'vigilantissimo vescovo.'

The church is attractive only for the sake of its two superb marble pavements, one of which (before the high altar) was brought from the Villa Jovis in 1759, and given to the cathedral by the Bourbon Charles III.; and the other (in the north-east chapel) was found in 1888 in the palace of Augustus at Tragara. In a chapel on the south

side is a recumbent statue of the founder of the Certosa, dressed in a flowing mantle and holding a model of the monastery. Opposite is his actual tomb.

The picturesque monastery of La Certosa, standing on a site anciently called Sama, was thus described by Hadrawa a century ago: 'The fathers possess all the ground in this part of the island, and much elsewhere, both in Capri and on the mainland. There are only fourteen of them, with a revenue of 12,000 ducats [upwards of £2,000], who give away in alms enough corn and bread for the wants of the poorest in the island, besides contributing to various extraordinary expenses of the Bishop. They make the best bread, and an excellent *rosolio*, or liqueur. They are now and then engaged in litigation with the chapter, for the simple reason that wealth opposed to beggary brings forth envy. The society holds large and special privileges from Queen Joanna I. The monastery and cloisters are very large, and the church is beautiful, though adorned with frescoes of no great value.'

The coming of the monks from Monte Cassino in the sixth century was followed by that of the Franciscans and the Carthusians, for the latter of whom, in 1363, Giacomo Arcucci, Count of

Minervino and Altamura, as a thankoffering for the birth of a son, began the erection of the Certosa after the plan of the San Martino convent in Naples. The Count was Secretary and Grand Chamberlain to Joanna I., whose fortunes so strangely foreshadowed those of Mary, Queen of Scots. It is a strong temptation to a lotos-eater to linger over the fascinating story of this beautiful and much-married woman. 'Her portrait,' says Brantome, 'shows that she was more angelic than human: I saw it in Naples, where it is treasured with the utmost care. Her countenance displayed great sweetness with a beautiful majesty.' Andrea, her Hungarian husband, to whom she was married at the age of seven—a marriage of which the only offspring was a century and a half of civil war—developed into an indolent drunkard, known contemptuously among the Neapolitans as Andreasso; and on September 18, 1345, after a midnight orgy at Aversa (cradle of the *fabula Atellana*, earliest Roman comedy, and the first Norman settlement in Italy), he was throttled by his nobles. He was just sober enough, as Polistore narrates, to hiccough out '*Questo è un sozzo giuco*' (It is a dirty game), and to seize with his teeth one of Nicholà Acciajuoli's hands, a piece of which was found in his mouth next morning, as he lay in his palace garden

stark and stiff, with nothing on but a white and red stocking, after the fantastic fashion of the time. His tomb is in the north transept of Naples Cathedral, side by side with Innocent IV., and bears an inscription recording that he was 'Joannæ uxoris dolo laqueo necato.' Hallam, however, has acquitted his wife of the loathsome complicity thus attributed to her. But she paid the penalty of being a suspected participator in the crime by being driven for awhile from her kingdom by Louis, the elder brother of Andrea. She returned, however, and lived to marry three more husbands, and to accomplish a reign of forty years.

The new monastery was put under the patronage of St. James the Less (one of whose numerous arms formed for many years a precious relic in the sacristy), and was enriched by the Queen and Gregory IX. with many possessions, to which additions were made from time to time, until the Count fell under the displeasure of Charles of Durazzo, who deprived him of his offices, and reduced him to such poverty that in 1386 he sought, like another Wolsey, a refuge and a grave within the cloister.

The dismantled church of SS. Salvatore, which with its chapels and sacristy is now used as a dormitory, is of fine proportions, 150 feet long by 40

in width, and still retains an imposing appearance, notwithstanding the dilapidated condition of the seventeenth-century frescoes, which, like the cloisters, are noteworthy only for the amount of space that they cover.* During the time of its occupation as a barrack the soldiers defaced the frescoes 'per lo spirito d' incredulità,' and some of them who broke up a large stone crucifix were heavily punished by their officer. The whole place is now 'ridotta a stato miserevole,' yet with evident tokens of former splendour. The fine high altar has been removed to a church at Posilipo, but the handsome campanile is still standing, as is also the clock-tower. Not only for their pharmacy, but for many other benefits, the monks were held in the highest estimation by the people of Capri, and on the suppression of the house eighty years ago they departed amid universal lamentations, their vestments and the silver statue of St. James being handed over to the cathedral chapter. In answer to an inquiry made in 1820 by the Vicar-General of Sorrento, it was stated by the chapter that the statue had been sent originally from Spain, in 1430, by Joanna II.,

* The Certosa monasteries derive their name from the place in Grenoble to which their founder, St. Bruno, retired. He died in 1101 at Serra, near Mileto, in Calabria, and was interred under the rocky ridge of Monte Astore.

commonly known as 'the Catholic,' to distinguish her from the first of her name, who took the part of the antipope Clement. She also gave eight statuettes of wood with inset relics, and a marble reliquary, with four crystal caskets containing relics. It was further stated that in 1809 the original documents setting forth these gifts, together with a part of the rich library, were sent to the San Severino monastery in the Piazza S. Marcellino at Naples, which has been for many years the depository of the national archives.

A path alongside the monastery wall leads to a charming view of the picturesque south side. Farther on, upon the cliff, is the shattered base of a watch-tower, with a large cistern, and masses of Roman masonry underlying the mediæval walls; all that is left of an imperial residence, of which the greater part was no doubt hurled by an earthquake into the water at the entrance of the Grotta dell' Arsenale, far down below.

One of the numerous island myths is that there used to be an underground passage running from the Certosa to the neighbouring convent of Santa Teresa, which was founded in the middle of the seventeenth century by a certain Serafina di Dio, the daughter of Antonio Piso, a Neapolitan, by his second wife Giustina Strina, a Capriote. Serafina

(born October 20, 1621) from the time of her first communion, at the age of seven, was distinguished for her strict and exemplary life, and after declining an attractive offer of marriage from a Neapolitan, she put on the Dominican habit as a *terziaria*. When she was thirty-five years old she received a charge from her uncle, the Archdeacon Marcello Strina, to carry on the building of a convent upon which he had set his heart; and while the work was proceeding she hired a small house in which she began the education and training of young girls. The foundation-stone was laid by Bishop Pellegrini in October, 1666, from which soon rose, under the protection of 'the Most Holy Saviour,' a building of large and handsome proportions, and with a magnificent view over the bay. The nuns, under the rule of Santa Teresa, carried on the work of education until the suppression of the convent at the beginning of the present century. The church, which then contained much rich decoration and marbles from the Roman imperial palaces, was consecrated on October 11, 1685, by the Cardinal Archbishop of Manfredonia, afterwards Pope Benedict VIII. In 1699 the venerable mother Serafina died, at the age of seventy-seven, 'piena di tutte le virtù,' and after lying in state for ten days was buried in the church,

from which a century later her remains were transferred to the cathedral, where there is a picture of her in the sacristy. In 1879 steps were taken with a view to her formal beatification, but the matter seems to have fallen through. At the time of the French occupation the nuns, not wishing that the costly silver statue of their divine Protector should fall into profane hands, determined to divide it among themselves. The *parroco* accordingly ordered it to be brought before him, and after a short prayer dealt it a vigorous blow with a hatchet, upon which the nuns fell a-groaning and 'some swooned away.' The poor *parroco* paid for his temerity by losing the use of his fingers. The place was shortly after ransacked and converted into a military barrack, and later on into a branch of the invalids' home at Massa. In 1840 the nuncio obtained a decree from Ferdinand II. permitting him to take away the altars and marbles and pictures to Torre Annunziata, where he was building a church. The devout Capri folk, distressed at such spoliation, besought Archbishop Ugo at Massa to use his influence for the restoration of the church to its sacred purposes, and with such good effect that Ferdinand granted their prayer.

Down at Fortino, to the east of the Marina, there can still be seen the foundations of a hospice which once belonged to the 'Minori Conventuali di San Francesco.' During its brief existence it acquired some celebrity from the sojourn within its walls of St. Bonaventura of Potenza in Lucania, near the 'fons Bandusiæ,' the 'pauper Daunus,' and the far-resounding Ofanto, the Aufidus of Horace, that once ran red with Roman blood from Cannæ. The saint, after he had won the hearts of the poverty-stricken islanders by his ministrations, went on to Ischia, and thence to Ravello, where he died in 1711. The little hospice had but a short life, being suppressed in 1682, with many other small religious houses, by a Bull of Innocent X.

The convent of Santa Teresa was far from being the only good work of the venerable mother Serafina, who, in addition to others at Massa, Vico Equense, Nocera de' Pagani, and Torre del Greco, completed another house 'di scalze' at Anacapri in 1683, a noble building situated in what is now the centre of the village. It was suppressed by the French, and in 1860 sold to a society of evangelists. Adjoining it is a small circular church, dedicated to St. Michael, and containing a very handsome and curious majolica pavement, representing

antediluvian times in Eden, with the tree of life and knowledge in full fruit; from which our first parents, surrounded by their primæval pets, are being driven by the archangel with flaming sword, while a dog is absorbed in the introduction of death by the capture of a rat. The pavement was made by Leonardo Chiaise in 1761, from a design, so it is said, by Solimena, the painter of some of the frescoes in Naples Cathedral. The high altar is simply superb, being adorned not only with priceless marbles, but with what is probably the largest piece of antique lapis-lazuli in the world, of immense value. The church is the most noteworthy in the island, but is now kept closed, and can be seen only by special permission. By a decree of the Bourbons it was conceded to the Confraternità della Immacolata, which during the winter months used to perform the sacred offices here, and in summer-time in the neighbouring parish church of Santa Sofia.

The earliest churches in Anacapri were those of S. Maria di Catena (now a cornfield) and S. Maria di Costantinopoli, still in use. S. Maria delle Grazie fell in about half a century ago, and of S. Nicholà there is but one wall left in the piazza, to which it gave its name. The parish church of Santa Sofia is the next oldest, 'dicatum anno domini

1510.' Twenty years ago the interior was improved by a new choir, baptistery, and marble pavement.

The chapel of the Annunciation, transformed out of all recognition, stands on the site of the Augustan villa of Capodimonte, surrounded by a wall built when the French turned it into a powder-magazine.

A few yards below, on a little plateau at the point where the new road cuts through the stairway, stands the chapel of Sant' Antonio da Padova, the protector of Anacapri, with roof and wall crushed in by falling masses of rock from the mountain. For many years it was customary to set a lighted lamp in the chapel at night-time, as a guide for mariners and those descending the stairs.

There is but one more to make mention of — the shrine 300 feet below the topmost point of Monte Solaro, overlooking the Mulo ravine. It is dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin, and called Santa Maria a Citrella. Its probable date is the seventeenth century. There is a rambling old hermitage adjoining, which for many years was inhabited by an anchorite, who died but recently. The spot, from which there is an enchanting view, has rather an evil reputation,

from its liability during storms to lightning strokes. In 1704, or thereabouts, several statues were unearthed at the Citrella, from which the opinion was formed that a temple of Venus at one time stood there; whence its other names of Citerea (suggesting a name given to the goddess from an island near Candia) and Citalia, which may stand for a corruption of Idalia, in Cyprus, where the cult of Venus was especially in vogue.

CHAPTER VII.

FESTA AND FEUD.

'Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain'

MONSIGNOR CANALE, lately deceased, records, in his veracious 'Storia di Capri,' that when Victor Emanuel was proclaimed King of Italy, the worthy Capriotes gave themselves up to such riotous demonstrations—*baccani e demostrazioni*—that one would have thought they had taken leave of their senses. Were it not impertinent on the part of an outsider, I should certainly feel inclined to endorse his statement—at least, as regards the possibility of such temporary aberration as he refers to. For during the last three days every Capriote man, woman and child has been cutting capers, and behaving generally in an idiotic kind of way, which is due to the fact that the island has been *en fête* in honour of San Costanzo, whose

annual festival is held on May 14. Hence it has come about that a lotos-eater's dreams have been rudely disturbed, and upon the shores of my garden there has broken a wild wave of bacchantic revelry, of which no trace now remains save in the disordered piazza (which wears an unmistakable look of having been sitting up for several nights), and upon the face here of one and there of another, where sits such melancholy as is wont to linger around the man who, having had 'his day out,' knows that three hundred and sixty-four suns shall rise and set before he has another quite like it. Would that every social 'spree' and religious gathering left as light hearts and as few broken heads behind it as does this Capriote *festa!* I can give but a faint idea of the bottomless abandonment of the whole population; and yet I am bold to say that there is not a 'hot copper' or a headache in the whole island this morning, and that the only individual who has a single regretful memory of the feast is possibly the poor old saint in whose honour it has been held.

Before I arrange the disordered threads of my very much tangled reminiscences, I feel bound to throw what light I can upon his saintship's rather obscure personality. San Costanzo, or St. Constantius, in whose veins flowed the blood of Eastern

emperors, was distinguished not less for his learning than for the sanctity of his life, and was called to the bishopric of Constantinople some time in the seventh century. Although of no canonical conspicuousness, he is naturally to the Capriote a saint of the first water: which means more than may be supposed, seeing that he arrived in the first instance by sea, having, through a slight misunderstanding with the authorities, suffered the inconvenience of being sent afloat in a wooden cask. Being, as it would be graceless to doubt, miraculously preserved, he found his way in time round to Capri, after a trip of which, unfortunately, no detailed record has been preserved. Some say that he had already attained the martyr's crown, and was dead when he started; others that he succumbed *en voyage*, either from asphyxia or vexation of spirit. In any case, it is on record that he arrived here by deep sea route in good order, and, after being dried, was promptly promoted to the responsible office of patron and protector of the island, jointly with St. Antony of Padua, who reigns supreme at Anacapri. Here he died and was uried, his remains resting undisturbed for 600 years, until, during the blood-red reign of the brave but ill-fated Conradin, and the papacy of Clement IV., they

were sent by the monks first to Benevento, and afterwards to the famous convent of Monte Vergine, near Avellino in the Apennines, where, the Abbat informs me, they are still preserved.

The saint has proved himself a faithful and efficient protector, and many are the unwritten records of his supernatural performances that lie enshrined in the memories of his faithful protégés. He has, since his removal to a better world, opened the eyes of the blind, sent cripples away rejoicing, averted by a tempest an attack of the Saracens in the year 891 (a date which enables us, in a measure, to fix the beginning of his cult in the island), and, by a variety of judicious channels, has insinuated himself into the affections of the islanders. But his crowning feat was during the great vine and fruit plague in 1839, when, in return for his intervention, he was presented with a silver bunch of grapes and a lemon, which now hang from the right wrist of his statue. The effigy itself, heavily overlaid with silver and of immense weight, was fashioned in 1715, partly by a grant from the public funds and partly by private offerings, during the episcopate of Bishop Vandeneynde. It represents the saint life-size as far as the waist, and bears the following inscription along the base: 'Divo Constantio Caprearum insulæ Patrono

amantissimo simulacrum hoc ex publica annonæ questu piorumque hominum subsidiis grati animi cives construxere anno ab orbe redempto 1715. Dignissimo præsule Illmo et R^mo D. M. Gallo Vandeneynde.' The saint is vested in pontifical habit, holding in his left hand a staff and book, with two metallic *bambini* vowed as a thank-offering by Capri women, and with his right bestowing the episcopal benediction. His mitre and pectoral cross are ablaze with gems.

An excellent picture of the statue, taken from a daguerreotype at the cost of Dr. S. S. Clark, a former resident in Capri, is sold and distributed at the time of the *festa*. In 1860 the Government threw the Capresi into a state of consternation by giving orders for the weighing of their saint, with a view, as was said, to his being boiled down into five-franc pieces. The calamity was only averted by the munificent action of one of the Canons, who handed over to the authorities a sum in hard cash equivalent to the value of the precious metal. It appears on the whole to have had a chequered career in the hands of pawnbrokers and others, and I am credibly informed that the original expense of covering the effigy with silver has never been entirely defrayed. The church, in addition to this counterfeit presentment, is the

happy possessor also of a portion of San Costanzo's backbone, as well as one of his knee-caps.

And now for the feast itself, which began on Friday evening with the first vespers in the *tempio maggiore*—in other words, the ex-cathedral—after a showery afternoon, and such a lurid sunset as sent half the town to their windows to see whether the treacherous mountain across the bay was not about to offer a display of pyrotechnics on his own account. Inside the church the fiery glow paled the hundred tapers on the altar, and set a blush upon the cheeks of the saint where he sat lofty and alone, under a vast crimson canopy over the choir, looking down with a stony (or perhaps I ought to say a silvery) stare upon his children, as they thronged every nook and corner of the building, awaiting with eager impatience the procession and exposition of their patron. On his throne, with mitre, cope and crosier, sat the Most Reverend Monsieur Giuseppe Giustiniani, Archbishop of Sorrento, surrounded, as they would say at Aldershot, by a brilliant staff; an erect old gentleman, with 'Ultramontane' writ large in every line of a hard face—a face that, if report speak truly, does not belie the stiffness of its owner's principles, or the pitiless rigour with which he is apt to 'come down' on the peccadilloes of such clerics as, like the

majority in Capri, have the misfortune to cherish more liberal convictions than his own.

In a side chapel were posted the municipal brass band of thirty players, who from time to time during the progress of the function treated us—and excellently well, too—to a lively 'quick step,' which, in conjunction with the impotent tootle of a child's halfpenny trumpet and the yelps of a meandering and mouldy-looking dog, helped to drown the excruciating singing of those in choir. At last the doleful office came to an end, and then the procession wound its way slowly down the south aisle and up the nave to the sound of a singularly lugubrious hymn, the infirm-looking torso of the saint under a catafalque of cloth-of-gold being borne on the shoulders of four strong men back to the sanctuary, where he was deposited on a seat at one end of the altar, looking (though it is far from my wish to speak evil of dignities) as though he was very much relieved by the thought that he was not to be moved again before morning. His legs, if he had had any, would have rested at that moment upon the many-coloured marble pavement taken from the palace of great Cæsar up at the Capo. Surely a strange coincidence, that the patron of to-day, a saint who—at least in effigy—has never known the luxury of a pair of legs, should take

his ease upon the marbles of that other who, in the days when Sejanus was calling himself Emperor of Rome and his master Emperor of Capri, had little either of head or heart.*

Then the multitude of merry holiday folk thronged out into the piazza, which was bravely decorated with Venetian masts and greenery, and bunting of many hues, with stalls of sweet-stuffs and tin-stuffs, and rosaries, and books, and chestnuts, and promising preparations for the show of fireworks after dark. Here is the official programme of the whole proceedings, which, alas! in its English dress cannot but lose much of its grace and elegance.

FRIDAY, MAY 13.

5 p.m. Exposition of the statue of the Saint in the great church.

8 p.m. Illumination of the public piazza and streets. The city band will perform choice selections.

10 p.m. Closing of the first day with fireworks, Bengal lights, fireballs, and grenades.

SATURDAY, MAY 14.

6 a.m. The municipal band will arouse the citizens to turn their first thoughts to their heavenly Patron, and to prepare themselves with a joyful mind to keep the feast.

* '*Seipsum imperatorem, Tiberium vero insulæ imperatorem prædicabat.*'—Dion Cassius.

10 a.m. At the church solemn pontifical Mass celebrated by S. E. the Most Reverend the Archbishop of Sorrento. The Very Reverend Dr. E. Eddº. Frai will hold the pulpit for a solemn panegyric on the Saint.

4 p.m. Solemn procession, in which all the congregations of the district, the reverend chapter and clergy of Capri, the reverend clergy of Anacapri, and the municipal council, will take part, to conduct the statue of the Saint to the church of San Costanzo at the Marina.

8 p.m. Musical performances, with grand display of fireworks, under the direction of, etc., etc.

SUNDAY, MAY 15.

10 a.m. Solemn *missa cantata* at the church of San Costanzo.

5 p.m. Solemn vespers in the aforesaid church, after which the statue of San Costanzo will be taken back in procession to the mother-church, 'colla benedizione del Santissimo.'

8 p.m. Musical concert and discharge of various fireworks.

An excellent bill of fare, like many others, on paper, but one of which the fruition perhaps can hardly be said to have matched the promise. Still, everybody who was anybody pronounced the festivities to be beyond criticism, so there could not have been much the matter. The weather, with one brief interval, was superb, the sun pouring down its most dazzling rays from a cloudless sapphire sky; and the moon taking up her tale from behind the Tuoro Grande, as the thousand

and one tiny oil-lamps on the piazza shed a precarious glimmer over the moving mass of happy-faced humanity below. What if one or two of the more complicated set pieces in the pyrotechnic display refused their revolutionary office when called upon, and, with a traitorous disinclination to be made light of in accordance with the sanguine intentions of the artist, lay in a fizzling, sputtering, snorting heap upon the unsympathetic lava blocks? What if the combustible effigy of his godship, the *fons et origo* of the feast, mounted on the apex of a pyramid of squibs, went through what I can only describe as a jibbing and bucking performance on his own account, amid jeers and laughter suggestive of the muttered maledictions of the Neapolitans when they seek to quicken the tarrying liquefaction of the blood of San Gennaro, and which apparently so stung the squib-stuffed prelate to madness that he flung decency to the winds, and, regardless of his latter end, hissed forth defiance and vomited flaming venom from his vitals into the first-floor windows, and, going off into a random reel, finally perished, Dagon-like, all but his stump — a very *ignis fatuus* — in a disorderly pirouette? A margin must be allowed in consideration of the fact that there was not a cracker, or *bomba*, or Catharine wheel from first to last that

was not 'turned out' by the local Brock; in other words, by the brothers and husbands of the dark-eyed chattering *contadinas*, who filled the air with lamentations loud and deep when Filippo's *scoppio di razza* made a fool of itself, or Luigi's huge fire balloon lingered for the space of a paternoster between the devil and the deep sea on the roof of the Municipio, and then, with a sudden plunge, sought to drown the evaporation of its spirits in the water 500 feet below; while the purple night air was alive with rainbow showers that lit up the quaint Mooresque cupolas of the church, and shed a fantastic glitter of ruby and gold and amethyst far over the white strand of the Marina, where Venus as she sank to rest was plucking the silver jewels from her brow and laying them in a track of mimic fire across the bay. Nobody demanded his money back, or threatened to write to the local newspapers, or called down vengeance on the head of the luckless fabricator of the aerial misdemeanant who had fallen so low. No sooner had the half-acre of paste and paper vanished *à la Curtius* into the abyss, than the band, in a handsome uniform of dark blue with gold facings, struck up a pot-pourri from the 'Forza del Destino,' and everybody who could afford it succumbed to the feeble delights of *limonade gassosa*, or the

vermouth of Turin. Those who had the necessary *soldi* in their pockets drowned the memory of the contretemps in the flowing nut-brown beer of Bavaria. Those who had none—whom the 'cow had passed'*—did the next best thing: they stood and looked on, and tried hard not to feel dry. The Capriote, be it known unto all men, is conspicuous at all times for his sober ways. There is nothing to move him to make a beast of himself or pose as a sot. The only liquors within his reach are too costly when taken in excess: he lives too hard a life all round, and his streets are too narrow for a really satisfactory roll. The roistering votary of Bacchus requires room in his cups, and that is just what he cannot get in this little island, which is never 'tight' in an intemperate sense. The Corso di Timberio, the Oxford Street of Capri, is but six feet wide, and could be laid out like a strip of ribbon on the floor of Peter Robinson's without inconvenience to his customers. I have seen but one man who needed the indulgence of his neighbours, having too freely gratified his own; and he was an unmistakable loafer from

* *Vacca pass'*—a delicious saying in these parts, taken from the house-to-house milking of the cows in Naples. Of those who cannot afford to pay for a glass it is said, 'The cow has gone by,' whence it is used of anyone who has not 'a shot in his locker.'

Naples, a social excrescence not to be taken count of.

On the following morning my slumbers were broken soon after dawn by the braying of the band and the explosion of a whole broadside of *bombas*, intended (vide programme) to prepare the citizens with a joyful mind to keep the feast. Then at ten o'clock I made my way to the cathedral, where High Mass was sung with the utmost pomp, the Archbishop of Sorrento being the celebrant. The elaborate ritual incidental to the occasion was very reverently and well done, but the music was atrocious. An oration on the virtues and example of the saint was delivered by Dr. Frai, whose long-drawn discourse I found so moving that I was constrained at intervals to repair for a breath of fresh air to the cool shadows outside, as a grateful relief from the throng of perspiring peasants and salivating sailors and unquiet *bambini*, and the less human odours of incense and flowers. At the supreme moment of the elevation of the Host, the bells in the old campanile fairly went mad, while the air was rent with such a discharge of fireworks as must have reminded the hero of the day (the only inhabitant old enough to remember it) of the bombardment by the French in 1808, which smashed up the house of the Governor, that stood



PROCESSION OF SAN COSTANZO.

To face p. 161.

where now is the little public garden just under the clock tower.

The great event of the *festa* was the procession on Saturday afternoon, which passed off without a hitch, and, as seen from the loggia of the old palace, was a most effective and picturesque sight. At the head was borne a finely-worked banner of maroon silk, followed by a band of twenty female mites, garlanded with flowers, whose united ages could not have exceeded five score. After these marched a hundred and fifty *filles de Marie* in white frocks with blue sashes and veils, then a banner and half a hundred lads of the Guild of S. Luigi di Gonzada, whose festival takes place but once in a century; then came the banner of the fishermen's guild, escorted by files of sun-tanned sailors; and after these more banners, followed by the municipal council, the students, a herculean Suisse, a crucifix, and the Capri canons and clergy, each carrying a tall lighted taper, from the smallest midget to the portliest ecclesiastic. Lastly, carried aloft on the shoulders of four fishermen dressed in long white caftans with scarlet tippets, came San Costanzo (in silver), looking, as I thought, a trifle bored, either from the loss (already mentioned) of a portion of his vertebræ, or from the consciousness that his legs were 'out

of it,' or, as is more likely, from the suffocating fumes of the innumerable fireworks which enveloped him in a sulphurous haze. The rolling manner of his progression was eminently suggestive of his early Jonah-like adventures, though under no circumstances can a more than elderly gentleman feel really at his ease when he is being swayed to and fro on men's shoulders down a winding rocky path at an angle of twenty or thirty degrees, environed at every turn by a tempest of ear-splitting bombs and *fuochi artificiali*, to say nothing of the sweeter and softer floral offerings that are showered upon him from housetop and balcony and garden-wall. But on the whole he behaved very well, and bore his part bravely in a spectacle that, as it wound among the bright vineyards and fruit-laden lemon groves down to the Marina, formed a picturesque scene that it would be hard to match. For the best part of a mile the pageant passed through crowds of devout worshippers, or admirers, if you prefer it, the gemmed mitre of the saint lit up by the westering sunbeams from over the Citrella, till it finally reached the little church, which was a place of worship centuries before a Constantine ever reigned, and which, with no architectural beauty, looked to-day, in its festival attire, not unlike some

ancient wrinkled dame tricked out in the frippery of a May-queen. Within its venerable and, alas! white-washed walls, the statue of the patron was duly laid to rest with sounding song and psalm; that is to say, he was deposited at a distinctly perilous altitude under a lofty canopy over the high altar, where he was left to his own meditations till the following morning. In the evening mirth and music, accompanied by fireworks of a more or less recalcitrant nature; and so home to the shelter of my mosquito-net and a nightmare of weak-kneed prelacy.

Sunday dawned hot and cloudless, with a look of soft tranquillity that unhappily was disturbed towards evening by a most untoward breaking-up of the windows of heaven, for which I am inclined to believe that the persistent bombardment of the last forty-eight hours must be held responsible. Sound travels, as we know, about a thousand feet in a second; but, then, heaven is a long way off—at least, from some of us—and it may well be that the detonations of last night and the night before had so upset the upper regions of the air as to bring about an afternoon deluge, which mercilessly drenched the procession, all the sweet little girls and good little boys, and made the saint put his umbrella up as he was being carried back to the

town from his temporary resting-place. Quite pitiable was it to see the dripping, draggled garments, and the washed-out finery, and the limp cassocks and cottas. I thought at one moment, so fierce was the blinding cataract, that the whole escort of officiants (for your Italian has no fancy for rainwater in a falling state) would have deposited their saint under a hedge and taken to their heels. But they marched stolidly on, the last to desert them being the band, who played on until the euphonium was full of water, and then, having lost communication with their base, left off suddenly on a chord of the suspended ninth, and sought shelter under a grove of lemon-trees. Needless to say that we were that night spared the fireworks, and long before midnight struck the feast, except for an expiring kick on the day of the octave, was at an end.

It is a melancholy reflection, on the top of so much gaiety and good humour, that out of this annual *festa* has grown that festering feud already alluded to, which for long years has marred the unity of the brethren in this peaceful little island. I will tell the story in as few words as I can, premising that I draw my facts from a quaint pamphlet signed by 'Sacerdote Carmine Santaniello,' and dated November 21, 1822. The

title runs thus in English: 'The dolorous complaints of the clergy of Anacapri against the unjust abuses and pretensions of the chapter and clergy of the collegiate church of Capri, in the diocese of Sorrento, in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, on the subject of the alleged taking part of the aforesaid in the processions in Capri, humbly addressed to the most eminent and reverend Lord Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of the Council in Rome.'

On the suppression of the bishopric of Capri in 1818, and the incorporation of the diocese with that of Sorrento, the church of San Stefano naturally lost the dignity of a cathedral, and the question soon became a hotly debated one whether with that dignity had disappeared also all the rights, prerogatives and precedences pertaining thereto.

Much of the trouble that arose was aggravated by the fact that, though the ecclesiastical archives of Capri were nominally removed to Sorrento, a very large number of them—'moltissimi' says my brief—were lost or wantonly destroyed as things of no value; and as it is well known that the man who burns an old letter which he has not looked at for years usually wants it in the course of the next week, so it chanced (though the Anacapriote

clergy hinted that something more than chance had a finger in it) that the very deeds which might have settled the dispute were 'found to be lost.'

Now began a flutter in the dovecote. For years innumerable on May 14 the chapter and clergy of the island had always made an act of formal homage to their diocesan. This, seeing that it involved a journey to Sorrento, was now transferred to the *festa* of SS. Philip and James on May 1; and the clergy of Anacapri, acting on the opinion that the church of San Stefano (of later date, indeed, than their own) had no claim upon their allegiance after the removal of the Bishop, began to groan audibly under the obligation laid on them of taking part every year in nine processions away down at Capri—to wit on Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, S. Mark, S. Costanzo, Pentecost, Corpus Domini, the Assumption, and SS. Simon and Jude. They alleged, poor men! not only that the fatigue of getting up and down the steep rocky stairway between the two communes was too much for them, but also that the withdrawal of their presence from their own flock on some of the greatest days in the year was fraught with injury, inasmuch as they were obliged either to leave one or two infirm priests in charge, or else

to transfer the observance of the *festa* to some other day.

The *fons et origo* of the whole trouble was the synod held ninety years before by Bishop Pellegrini, at which (as was now stoutly affirmed) certain obnoxious 'constitutions' had been passed after an irregular discussion when two-thirds of the clergy were absent. It was also stated that of those present five signed conditionally, and one protested fearlessly against what he was pleased to call 'barbarous oppression and dolorous servitude.' In 1730 Bishop Laurentiis buckled on his harness and made up his mind to be no longer trifled with. From persuasion he had condescended to argument, which had as little effect upon the sturdy protestors as the menaces that followed. Clearly, more drastic measures must be resorted to; and, accordingly, this high-handed prelate (who would have made an admirable vice-president of a persecution company in our own day) proceeded to enforce obedience upon his recalcitrant clergy by fines and imprisonments. The whole matter was then referred by the Anacapriotes to Rome, and a decision was given in their favour; but Bishop Laurentiis, like Nelson in later times, taking no notice of the order to cease firing, double-shotted his guns, and added insult to injury by roughly

declining to supply the petitioners with copies of any of the official documents relating to the synodal acts. Thereupon the Anacapri clergy, waxing wroth, had resort once more to the Sacred Congregation of the Council, whose injunction for the production of the documents was quickly handed by the canny Bishop to his diocesan officers, who on their part declined to take any further steps.

The main ground of the Bishop's action was that he had no power to dispense with the formal acts of homage on the part of his clergy ; and so far the Sacred Congregation seems to have backed him up. Whereupon the priests of Anacapri gave in to the extent of consenting, under protest, to take their place in the processions, the Bishop on his side promising to remit the heavier penalties for default, and to substitute a fine of a few *grane*. Still, however, the lilliputian storm bubbled on till it fairly overflowed the teacup, and landed two Anacapri priests in gaol, whence they only emerged after paying the fine incurred by their brethren, who, after playing truant, had fled for refuge to the churches of Santa Sofia and S. Maria a Citrella.

The civil powers now cut in, and, in response to a 'mass meeting' (probably about as large as a meeting of parliamentary electors in the island of

Rum or Raasay), the Sindaco of Anacapri, Nicholà Ferraro, convoked a council by 'sound of bell' on July 3, 1732, and in his speech thus outlined the situation. He told the citizens that he had called them together 'hearing the lamentations of both men and women at the oppression of the illustrious Bishop, whose predecessors for the last hundred years have always ruled with great charity and fatherly love. But he, regardless of the cries of poor citizens, has obliged all the priests of this commune to go down to Capri on five *festas*, leaving two, or three at the most, unfit for the service of the Church, although there are more than 2,000 inhabitants in Anacapri, a larger number than in Capri. By this means the holy sacraments on those days cannot be administered, and persons have been left to die without ministrations. To put an end to this unseemly state of things, the clergy of Anacapri have had recourse, but in vain, to the illustrious Bishop and to the most reverend Court of Rome, in spite of whose decrees unlawful acts have been resorted to, even to the imprisonment of our priests without reason assigned, and with menaces for the future. So all now are in great confusion and sorrow'—in una grandissima confusione e mestizia—'because of the lamentable complaints of the povere madri, padri,

e congiunti of the priests, which it is feared may give rise to a tumulto popolare con qualche scandolo universale of Holy Church.' The result of the meeting was that the Sindaco was empowered to appear personally before the nuncio in Naples, and, if necessary, before the higher powers in Rome. This, however, he seems never to have done, the Bishop at length, in response to a petition, so far relaxing the severity of his treatment as to let the *beneficed* clergy of Anacapri off all the processions except two—San Costanzo and Corpus Domini—which state of affairs lasted for nineteen years.

In 1751, the episcopal throne being vacant, the chapter took the opportunity to stir sleeping dogs, and egged on the Capitular Vicar to issue an edict ordering all beneficed as well as unbeneficed priests in the island to render him canonical obedience at the solemn mass on the *festa* of San Costanzo, after which they were to take their places, taper in hand, in the procession. They obeyed under protest as before. The new Bishop did not bring peace; the oppressed clergy (really I find some excuse for them when I think of that stairway!) persisting in a course of protests, and meeting from time to time in an excessively funny way to make the naïve declaration that any paper or papers they might at

any time sign through intimidation and fear of violence would be held by them as being null and void.

Thus matters stood for nearly seventy years, the quarrel being 'on the boil' the whole time, until, in 1822, a great lawsuit was started, of which the only result was a notification from Cardinal Caracciolo, the head of ecclesiastical affairs in the kingdom of Naples, to the effect that all existing prerogatives were to be respected except such as were incompatible with the altered circumstances of the collegiate church of San Stefano. To which rather enigmatic solution of a century of strife I will only add that at last year's *festa* only one of the Anacapriote clergy, and he a canon, took part in the procession of the patron saint. Why the others, who are not canons, should have been 'let off' as part of the pageant, I must leave to wiser heads than mine to determine.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROUND MY GARDEN.

All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.'

THE Giro, or tour round the island by water, is one of the most delightful experiences of a sojourn in Capri, and is the only means by which the fine coast scenery can be viewed at its best. Starting from the Grande Marina and steering westwards, the gaily-painted boat cuts its way through pellucid braes and gently swelling hillocks of water, that sparkle in the sunshine with the tints of all the jewels in an emperor's crown.

Passing under the torn and broken cliffs of Aiano, we skirt the base of the old 'forum,' or *place d'armes*, commanded by a fort now turned into a villa. From time to time Egyptian remains have been excavated here, leading to the belief, as I have already mentioned, that anciently the site

may have been occupied by a temple of Isis. In former times the town of Capri lay between the Marina and Aiano, which latter place was also the site of an Augusto-Tiberian villa that stood between the mountain and the sea. The ruins, now almost entirely hidden, point to a very extensive and richly-adorned residence. In 1810 an interesting discovery was made hereabouts of a sarcophagus made out of one block of white marble, with a covering fastened on by four iron clamps. The sculpture-work is rude and heavy, with a medallion in relief of garlands and a Medusa-like head with wings. In the corners are skulls of bulls, on the ends wreaths of roses, and on the front leaves. Inside, with the head resting on a stone pillow, was found the skeleton of a girl, dressed in clothing of gold and silver, which all fell to dust when exposed to the air. By her side were a pair of armlets, some earrings, and a very small finger-ring with a cameo; and in the mouth was a gold piece of Vespasian, with the inscription, 'Imperator Cæsar Vespasianus Aug. Tr. P.' (*i.e.*, tribunitia potestate); on the reverse was a cornucopia. The hand held a sceptre fifty centimètres long, girt with three gold circlets; from which circumstance there can be no doubt that the body was that of an imperial princess, perhaps of Lucilla, sister of Com-

modus, by whom she was murdered in Capri, A.D. 183, at the age of sixteen. Some have suggested that it was the body of Crispina, the same Emperor's wife, who died here at the age of thirty-one; but the finger-ring, of an unusually small size, belonged probably to a much younger woman. The contents of the sarcophagus (which now stands under an oleander-tree on the terrace of the Hôtel Grotte Bleue) were sold for 100 francs. Near the same place a marble tablet was found on which was a Greek decree, of which Pelliccia gives the following version, 'Populus ne quis suscitet tumultum neque manibus aram in foro et agro publico.' Near at hand were found also three large cavities filled with water, and one with a metallic blue chalk mixed with earth, brought thither probably by the Romans for the making of the delicate 'vasi murrini,' the manufacture of which, as Pliny (H. N., xxxvii. 2) tells us, was first introduced into Italy by Pompey after his Oriental victories.

At the western end of the 'campo Aiano,' gliding over glassy depths whose tangled trailing vegetation looks far down under the keel like a glowing sea-garden—the very fields of Nereus—my boatmen pull me inshore at the mighty ruins of the Palazzo a Mare, once the Osborne House of the

Emperors, which with no sufficient reason it is the custom to call the Bagni di Tiberio. The perpetual washing of the waves in the course of eighteen centuries has undermined the strong limestone cliffs on which the palace once stood, and the smooth-worn blocks of stone that once formed the wall fronting the sea have long since fallen in chaotic ruin. The shape and extent of several of the chambers can still be traced, although the only courtiers now *en évidence* are crustaceans, Kronos and Neptune having joined forces and done their work but too well, aided by the ruthless hands of human spoilers. The palace before its destruction must have been a very beautiful one, especially if, as is probable, it stood much higher above the sea than it does now. Masses of submarine masonry can be seen many feet out from the shore, and it seems likely that at least a portion of the building was originally constructed actually in the water. In the immediate vicinity have been found Etruscan or Aretine vases of bright black pottery, large sepulchral urns, coins, bronze lucernas, terra-cotta and oxidized glass plates, tiles, amphoræ, and other household articles. Hadrawa laid bare a circular temple with a flight of ten marble steps leading up to a loggia which once stretched along the sea-front of the palace. He found also hand-

some columns of cipolline marble, the capital and base of an exquisitely-wrought Corinthian one, and two pavements of African, *giallo-antico*, *rosso*, and *saravazza* marbles, set in a geometrical design. Altogether 280 quintals, or about twenty-seven English tons, of rare and costly marbles have been excavated and carried off to heaven knows where. In the garden of a house not far off was found an altar of Cybele, the mother of the gods, which passed into the possession of Sir W. Hamilton,* who is said to have forwarded it to the British Museum. But I learn after inquiry in London that no such altar is or ever has been in the Museum, and that the only known Capri antiquity in our national collection is a puteal, or well-head, with reliefs of fauns and nymphs, brought by Charles Townley from the Palazzo Columbrano in Naples. The altar, of which Hadrawa gives a sketch, is cylindrical in form, 2 feet 9 inches high, with delicately-worked relief of festoons of flowers, corn, and fruit, pendent from the horns of

* Sir W. Hamilton's Italian collection was bought in 1772 by the British Museum, and formed the nucleus of a department of antiquities. It included 730 vases, 627 bronzes, 300 gems and ivories, and 6,000 coins. He afterwards formed a still larger collection, half of which was lost in H.M.S. *Colossus* (1798), and the remainder bought for the Hope Gallery.

a ram's head; beneath is either an oinochos or a sacrificial vase.

Beyond, under the shadow of the bold front of Monte Solaro, with the castle of Barbarossa looking no bigger than a crow's nest, we round the Punta Trasele, a reminiscence of the astrologer Thrasyllus. Past this point the boat should be taken close in under the rocks, where on a bright calm morning the water is of a marvellous indigo hue, and where for a distance of half a mile 'numerous holes and small caves,' says MacKowen, 'can be seen at the water's edge, made by the action of the sea, which rushes in and out with deep, hollow mysterious gurgles; and about sixteen feet above them appears a line of holes made in the same manner by the sea, when the island lay deeper in the water.' Into such fantastic shapes has the ceaseless plash of the waves worn and fretted the face of the rocky wall that it is difficult to believe that here and there the hand of man has not been at work.

A pull of a few minutes more and suddenly on turning a corner we sight the foot of the little stairway that leads down to the bay from Anacapri, and up which, in 1808, clambered the French reinforcements that completed the discomfiture of the troops under Major Hamill's command

near Damecuta. Close to the steps, near which are remains of Roman masonry, the tiny aperture is visible that forms the only entrance to the glory of Capri, the Grotta Azzurra. What Sydney Harbour is to the New South Wales man, or Thorwaldsen's Lion to Lucerne, that and more also is the Blue Grotto to the Capriote. Before I change my large four-oared boat for a smaller shallop, and penetrate into the wonders within, let me tell what there is to be told about it from the exterior. The grotto is elliptical, with extensions towards north-east and south-west, and is 163 feet long by 86 feet wide, with a depth of between 60 and 70 feet. Nearly three centuries ago it was known to Capaccio, who in his 'Historiæ Napolitanæ,' published in 1605, says: 'Inter speluncas, una reliqua est, quam ingressu valde obscuram cernes, in lucidum deinde sinum desinit, in quem superne aquarum stillicidiis mare nimis delectabile redditur' (vol. ii., 166). About the year 1751 Antonio Parrino wrote a description of it after a personal visit, and in 1822 a Capri fisherman found his way in, followed in 1826 by two artists, August Kopisch, of Breslau, and Herr Fries, or Friso, who were practically the first in modern times to make its magical beauty known to the world. In 1846 Gabriele Quattromani wrote a

good description of its wonders, ever since which time a great number of visitors of all nationalities year by year have found their way hither, only in many cases to go back without effecting an entrance, which is impracticable when the wind blows strongly either from north or east. This an unfortunate Frenchman once found out to his cost, being imprisoned in the grotto for four days by the wind, and kept alive by a fisherman who swam backwards and forwards at intervals with supplies of rum.

I have already mentioned the evidences that meet the eye on all sides of the island of Capri having two thousand years ago stood above the sea-level many feet higher than it does now. That fact at once destroys all idea of the Blue Grotto having been anything more than a cool and pleasant resting-place in the time of the 'farouche despote,' or possibly a bath for the imperial harem. The height of the aperture through which boats now pass is six and a half feet, three feet of which, however, are under the water-line. 'On close inspection,' says MacKowen, who by diving made an investigation of the place, 'it will be seen that the rock, which forms the floor of this arched entrance, was level, and that this level floor projects several feet into the sea in front

of the arch in the shape of a commodious platform. The vertical sides of the entrance meet this level platform at right angles'—thus ⌂—'and it is seen at a glance that this entrance is artificial and has not been formed by the action of the sea-water, for under those circumstances the floor would have a round shape. A few feet to the right of the present entrance, and at a depth of seven and a half or eight feet below the water-level, can be seen the top of a large arch, which widens out until it reaches a profundity of about thirty feet; then the two sides approach each other gradually until they meet, forming thus a large round hole about fifty feet high by forty in width, through which the water of the Bay of Naples flows freely in and out of the grotto.' The present entrance, as the same writer suggests, may be nothing more than a hole cut for the purpose of ventilating the grotto in old times, when the way in lay through the aperture that is now many feet under water. It must be understood that, from the position of the grotto in the northern face of the rock, only the smallest amount of daylight can find its way in directly through the entrance. The whole splendour of the interior 'comes,' says Brecciani, 'from the refraction of the light, which is decomposed and refracted by its passage through the mass of

indigo-coloured water outside, by which medium the red and yellow rays are absorbed.' De Rivaz gives the following account: 'Ce phénomène, dû aux effets combinés de la transmission autant que de la réflexion de la lumière qui n'arrive dans cette caverne qu'après avoir traversé les ondes de la mer, provient de ce que les parois de la grotte dont il s'agit qu'on voit descendre perpendiculairement et presqu'en forme de muraille jusqu'au fond des eaux du côté gauche de son entrée, sont à l'opposite du côté droit de la même entrée disposées admirablement en forme de voûte, s'étendant à fleur d'eau dans une assez longue extension jùsqu'à une petite pointe contiguë qui plonge dans la mer, et formant ainsi une large et profonde cavité occupée entièrement par la plaine azurée, force est en conséquence aux rayons lumineux qui doivent passer à travers cette excavation pour parvenir dans ce lieu de se revêtir de la couleur des flots.' And he adds his objection to the use of the word 'refraction': 'On comprend facilement que la réfraction de la lumière ne joue ici non seulement qu'un rôle tout-à-fait secondaire, mais que le phénomène dont il est question dépend principalement de la couleur du milieu à travers lequel les rayons lumineux sont obligés de passer pour arriver jusque dans la grotte.'

And now, sitting down on the bottom of the little boat and flattening myself out like a bummelow, I am borne on the swell of a gentle billow through the lilliputian archway into the interior of the ether-gleaming cavern, that looks like the portal of an enchanted realm, a chamber in fairyland, the boudoir of a Siren. Around and above the cerulean walls and domed roof glisten and gleam with a strangely subdued splendour of softened sapphire, while the water, in whose pellucid depths skim black-finned fishes diapered on the white sand, glitters and scintillates as with a myriad brilliants. Flashes of exquisite silver light, like kisses of the sun-god, take the semblance of burning spirit iridescent with every hue of the rainbow; the water lies around like consolidated atmosphere scattered at every movement of the oars into drops of glowing spray like fresh-gathered rose-leaves. Still more entrancing is the marvel when a boy, like the ace of spades in 'Alice,' slips over the side of the skiff. His head and neck stand out like bronze, upon which the reflected ripples play like the flickering of a snap-dragon flame, while his limbs from foot to shoulder gleam like the limbs of a statue of frosted silver, bathed in a pure and limpid lustre of mingled azure and emerald. As he tosses his head to and

fro and splashes with feet and hands, he is enveloped with a glowing glory soft as a celestial cloud, that brings to one's mind the thought of that light which we may imagine as clothing the bodies of the immortals; the earthly tenement of the flesh, the opaque tegument of the soul, refined and irradiated and, as it were, made transparent from a fountain of indwelling light. Then, as the lad swings his lithe body back over the gunwale and there falls from him a broad shower of many-coloured dropping pearls, it needs but a little effort to imagine that I am in the home of Glaucus, the fisher god, and that if I but turn my head I shall behold his marine divinity reclining in glittering scales of azure armour, surrounded by attendant Tritons blowing fanfares on clarions of sea-shells, with a choir of seductive Sirens in waiting:

'*Who would be*
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combing her hair
Under the sea,
In a golden curl
With a comb of pearl,
On a throne?'

Glaucus, who of old is fabled to have made a grotto like this his home, and to have given his own name to the hue of the water, and received

the homage of every denizen of the deep, from unwieldy tunny to giddy garfish and tress-trailing mermaiden. The whole scene is indeed 'le plus beau des phénomènes de la lumière,' as it is called by Mouravieff, who adds prettily enough: 'Je ne veux pas que cette grotte soit d'azur mais de Glaucus, et j'affirme que c'est là que l'infortuné pêcheur est venu se réfugier après sa métamorphose ; et que c'est encore là que les dieux, touchés de sa disgrace, mais ne pouvant rien contre l'arrêt du destin, qui défendait à Glaucus de redevenir homme, le dépouillèrent à la fin de sa forme de poisson en ne laissant de lui dans ces eaux que l'azur de ses écailles, pour éterniser la mémoire de son nom et de ses malheurs.'

'Oh! azure rocks, oh! azure, azure sea,
Almost too bright in your intensity!
So blue in every part, so blue each nook,
To paint exactly 'twould unnatural look:
All blue, save where the rippling waters bright
Sparkle with almost phosphorescent light.'

W. W.

It has no rivals except a similar cavern at Busi, near the island of Lissa in the Adriatic ; and, on a smaller scale, the Dolor Hugo cave at the Lizard, where, however, the water is of a far darker tint, and the dark-green, scarlet-veined roof of serpentine is rich with a beauty all its own.

Emerging again to the outer world, we pass a modern French fort, and the old tower of Damecuta. Beyond this point, which is known as Gradelle, the coast scenery becomes less imposing in character. The slopes of the cliffs stretching down to the water are terraced, and the hillsides are clothed with verdure in striking contrast with the savagery of the steep precipices at the east end of the island. A few minutes brings me to Punta Vitareto, rounding which the boat's head is turned to the south, past Orica (where the French landed in 1808) and the plateau of Damecuta, covered with olives and vines and gardens teeming with vegetable life. Here, too, are many cacti, the fruit of which is eaten and enjoyed by the peasants. High up on the slopes is seen the French windmill overlooking the Rio and many another delightful summer bathing nook; after which, gliding past headlands crowned with forts, I catch sight of the square tower of the Matrita, once a *grancia*, or grange, built by the monks of the Certosa as a place of refuge for their goats from the raids of the Saracens. On the south-west extremity of the island, the Punta di Carena, stands a lighthouse, the erection of which was a burning question for a long time between the two rival communes of Capri and Anacapri, the former

demanding that it should be placed where Tiberius had built his Faro, so as to guide the mariner through the narrow *bocca* that parts Lo Capo from the Surrentine peninsula. The Anacapriotes, on the other hand, declared that the light on the Campanella promontory already served that purpose; and the Government, acquiescing in their opinion, put up here a lighthouse of the first class. Formerly there were semaphore signal stations on the top of Solaro, at Barbarossa's castle, and at Capodimonte, at the head of the stairs; but they have all been abandoned since the introduction of the electric telegraph ten years ago.

Once round the Carena, the cliffs again soar heavenwards in majestic grandeur, water-worn at their bases into a thousand jagged and fantastic forms, and riven from sea to summit by ages of shock and storm. At this point in the *giro* the sea-front of Monte Solaro bursts upon the view, for the first time, in all its sublimity. See him when you will, the mountain giant always looks well, but never do the lordly proportions of his vast mass stand out more clearly than when, from a boat, the eye looks up the steep sides to where, 2,000 feet above, a fragment of cloud floats, like a veil of gauze, about his brow. At the base lie the beauties of the Red and Green

Grottoes, the former of which is covered on walls and roof with a growth of deep-red lichen, whence its name. The Green Grotto is a *passaggio* rather than an actual grotto, and, with its moss-agate liquid floor, is hardly inferior in beauty to the Grotta Azzurra. It is an arched way hewn out by the waves from a cliff, and is large enough for a four-oared boat to pass through ; there is no entering through a hole as in the Blue Grotto, no sudden transition from sun to shadow. The boat glides in, and you see it all in a moment—the picturesque sculptured walls and roof, and the wonderful water brighter than young spring corn, deeper than beryl, with a play of light that can only be likened to emerald shot with all the changing tints of an opal. The grotto, which should be visited at about ten o'clock in the morning, possesses a peculiar feature in a spring or springs of sulphur, which can be smelt but not seen ; and it is from contact with this that the water is supposed to derive its very vivid hue.

From the Grotta Verde, twenty minutes' row under the stupendous mountain walls and round the Punta Ventroso brings my bark abreast of the Mulo (Moles), the landing-place of the Marina Piccola.

One could fancy that Spenser had this very

nook in his eye when he wrote of the dwelling-place of the Sirens.

'It was a still
And calmy bay, on th' one side shelterèd
With the brode shadow of an hoarie hill;
On th' other side an high rocke toured still,
That 'twixt them both a pleasaunt port they made,
And did like an halfe theatre fulfill.
There those five sisters had continuall trade,
And us'd to bath themselves in that deceiptfull shade.'

F. Q., ii. 12, 30.

Hence a rough path leads to the Parate, up a very steep slope which in the spring is the scene of the slaughter of many quails. This veritable 'harvest of the air' is gathered in either by a plentiful expenditure of cartridges, or by means of nets, of which there are two kinds. One kind, called *parate*, measuring some 200 feet long by 30 feet in height, are stretched on tall poles at the places where in the early morning the birds come in on their way from the north or south, as the case may be; at the bottom of the net is a fold, into which they fall after striking. The other is a kind of network fan, measuring about 20 feet across when opened, and is attached to a couple of light poles carried by a man, who, with a dog to flush the quails, at the proper moment furls the side of the fan by a smart and dexterous movement of his wrist.

High up in the face of the mountain yawns the

spacious aperture of the Fern Grotto, or Grotta dell' Arco ; while farther east towers the Castiglione hill (750 feet), with its fortress and a fine grotto that is inaccessible from the sea. This grotto can only be entered through the private grounds of the Castiglione, and is one of the largest and most interesting in the island. It contains 'opus reticulatum' of the Roman times,* much masonry, now covered by rubbish, two cisterns, and a ruined guard-house on the eastern side, long since disused and fallen to decay. The roof is covered with stalactites. The only present way of approach is down a steep narrow path from the top of the hill on the west, which, once closed or defended by a few resolute men, must have made the cave an impregnable place of refuge for the islanders when hard pressed by the pestilent Saracens. There are few places in Capri which would better repay the investigation of an explorer, for little has ever been found here, and the floor of the grotto remains cumbered with a mass of earth. Hence it is but a few yards farther to the Grotta dell' Arsenale, into

* 'Opus reticulatum' consists of small stones squared in front and set diagonally, making an effective pattern. The wear of time has crumbled away the softer stone and left only the adamantine cement, looking like honeycomb cells, and suggestive of the network from which it originally took its name.

which an inclined conglomerate plane, extending under the water for 120 feet, leads up from the sea, supposed by Mangoni to have served for the launching of ships. In this cave interesting relics have from time to time been brought to light of a nature that has induced the belief that it may have been used as an 'armamentarium maritimum,' or depot of stores for the use of the Roman fleet. It is elliptical in shape, 133 feet by 104, and about 30 feet high. The walls are lined with volcanic stone identical with that at Herculaneum, and are broken by the remains of two semicircular chambers and a cistern or two. On the east side is a ruined sarcophagus, probably of a date later than Roman times. There are also visible in the sides under the roof six holes at equal distances apart, which probably served as supports for a partition dividing the grotto in half. Many Roman remains have been found here, including rich marble pavement work (which seems to me at variance with the arsenal theory) and some iron work belonging to a Roman galley which Dr. Giraldi found in 1778. If the grotto was ever used, as it probably was, as a bath or a place of habitation, it affords an incidental proof of a subsequent depression in the shore-line, seeing that at present with every scirocco that blows the waves break far into the cave.

Beyond the Grotta dell' Arsenale the boat now skirts the Unghia Marina, an open plateau on which once stood a Roman villa, possibly one of the twelve mentioned by Tacitus. But I must repeat what I have already said with reference to the impossibility of identifying, with very few exceptions, any of the imperial residences.* To make the attempt is but to throw time and trouble away. Excavations made at the Unghia Marina in 1826 brought to the surface the usual marble pavements, some excellent paintings of birds, and the inscription

YACINTHI
JULIAE
AUGUSTAE,

* The words of Tacitus (iv. 67) are: 'Tum Tiberius duodecim villarum nominibus et molibus insederat.' The 'naming' of twelve houses seems rather an inadequate occupation for an Emperor, and various other readings have been suggested, *e.g.*, 'ignominiosis molibus,' 'montibus et molibus,' 'culminibus et montibus,' 'numinibus et molibus,' testifying to the ingenuity of commentators rather than to the necessity of the annalist having written other than the words of the accepted text. The passage, as Quaranta remarks, has been 'la croce di tutti gl' interpreti senza che per anco abbiano sciolto un groppo si intrigato;' and to those who find a difficulty in it as it stands, I venture to suggest that a reading of 'molibus et numinibus' may be justified by an appeal to the Roman custom of calling certain bacchanalian orgies 'epulæ duodecim numinorum,' feasts at which those present attired

from which arose the idea that the house was one built for Julia by her father Augustus. Some have more prosaically supposed that the three names, which stand vertically and are presumably in the genitive case, are merely the names of the brick-makers. If they refer to a royal Julia, she could not have been the Emperor's daughter, seeing that that lively young woman, whose third husband was her own stepson (Tiberius being one of the few men audacious enough to marry his mother-in-law), never bore the title of 'Augusta,' and was, moreover, a disgraced exile long before her father ever came to Capri. Perhaps the 'Juliæ Augustæ' stands for Livia, the second wife of Augustus and mother of Tiberius by Tiberius Nero, on whom, according to Tacitus (iv. 71) those names were actually bestowed, and who was a very different woman from the frivolous wife of Marcus Agrippa.

themselves in godlike raiment, and personated one of the twelve 'deos nobiles,' as Ovid calls them, the original proprietors of the Olympian show. It is on record that Augustus on one such occasion took the part of Apollo, and that when the poor 'plebs' were starving they turned wistful eyes to the Palatine hill, and, as they listened to the sounds of feasting, remarked grimly that 'the gods have eaten up the corn.' If this really be what Tacitus wrote, is it presumptuous to imagine the word 'numinibus' used in some such sense, with a reference to the profligate extravagance of the Claudian Emperor's manner of life?

On the edge of the Unghia Marina stands the monastery of the Certosa on the site of another large villa, which has in some bygone period been hurled into the sea by an earthquake. Many morsels of marble pavements and decorative work may be found on the shore below, and extensive masses of ruined brick and stone may be seen lying far beneath the surface of the water on a calm day. Between these and the Punta Tragara the boat can be rowed into a pretty natural passage chamber in the rock, known as the Albergo de' Pescatori, or Fishermen's Inn, a favourite place of shelter for boats while waiting for the setting of the moon. At the inner end of the *passaggio* are remains of masonry, portions, probably, of a stairway which led in former times to the vicinity of the Augustan palace on the western slope of the Tuoro Grande, a palace which must have been one of the largest in the island. Remains have been found of a line of rooms measuring 650 feet in length, and stretching from north-west to south-east, on the ridge of the rocky wall which was shaved away to make an artificial plateau. In a small chamber immediately adjoining the garden of the Villa Allers are some excellently-preserved coloured walls, with mosaic pavements and admirably-drawn animal pictures. A very handsome marble pavement from the same

spot has just been relaid in the north-east chapel of the ex-cathedral.

Perhaps the most picturesque corner of the island is now before us, where the cone-like Faraglioni rocks rise to a height of some 300 feet vertically out of the sea, standing like sentinels over the pretty port of Tragara, a little bit of a cove sheltered by the steep wall of the inner Faraglione on the south, and by the Monacone rock farther east. The name Tragara, connected with *tragos*, *tragao*, suggests a reference to the very unsavoury nickname of 'Caprineus' by which the Emperor Tiberius was called 'palam et vulgato' in consequence of his exploits as a libertine. The Faraglioni rocks are three in number, of which the inner one, called Stella, 600 feet in circuit, is joined to the Punta by a narrow tongue of rock, and, like its fellows, is practically unscalable, though you may find a fisherman who will, for a sufficiently tempting 'macaroni,' climb the olive-clad Scopolo, the outer one, and bring you back a peculiar variety of blue lizard, or a black snake. In the centre of the middle rock is a lofty and spacious vaulted *passaggio* worn by sea action, through which large boats can pass in calm weather. To the east stands the rugged *isoletta* of Monacone, upon which I landed, and the top of

which I reached by squirming through an orifice in the rock about large enough for the transit of a mongoose. Sticking hopelessly for some moments, I was at length extricated by one of the sailors, and then, crawling up a rocky stairway of forty steps—'alquanto difficile e faticosa'—I came to the small plateau 150 feet above the water, where is an ancient tomb in good preservation. It is 6 feet long and 3 wide, and was once, perhaps, a receptacle for the remains of Masgabas, who was a *persona grata* to Augustus. Suetonius records that, as the Emperor shortly before his death was sitting in the *triclinium* (probably of his palace at Tragara), he observed a great number of people with lights gathered round the tomb of Masgabas, who had died in the preceding year. He thereupon began to rhyme some impromptu verses on the subject, and, turning to Thrasyllus, asked him if he knew who was the author of them. The wily courtier, as shrewd as he was ignorant, at first hesitated to commit himself; whereupon the imperial poetaster capped his own line with another, and repeated his inquiry. And when Thrasyllus made answer that whoever was the author of them the lines could not be beaten—'cujuscumque essent optimos esse'—Augustus broke into laughter, 'atque in jocos effusus est.' Some have imagined

that this same rock of Monacone was the particular portion of the island to which the same Emperor sportively gave the name of Apragopolis, but of this there is no manner of certainty.*

The *porticello* of Tragara is fringed along its western side by extensive ruins of sea-walls, of Roman as well as mediæval construction, with a landing-place at the north end, and a flight of steps, and ruined stonework lying deep down in the clear water. In many places a line can be traced along the face of the rocks, twenty feet or more above the present sea-level, showing that at a former period, probably not a remote one, the island must have experienced upheaval as well as depression. The same thing is seen, as I have already pointed out, at many places along the coast, and notably on the mainland at Herculaneum, where, not far from the subterranean villa of the Argus, the steep gradient of an ancient street leading down to the sea tells of a time when the water level was higher than it is now. Higher up on the west side of the Tragara port is a perfect chaos of boulders and wrecked masonry, all that is now left of what once

* The scholiast on Juvenal, Sat. x. 93, says, 'De qua insula (Capri) Augustus Apragopolin dixit, quod ibi esset otii locus, ut ait Suetonius.' The latter author's words are, 'Vicinam Capreas insulam,' with a various reading 'Capreis,' whence the idea has originated.

was no doubt a busy scene. It will be remembered that Suetonius speaks of the 'unum parvumque littus' which formed a chief inducement to Tiberius to take up his abode in Capri. Whether or no this port of Tragara was the one alluded to cannot with certainty be known; but there seems to be reason for thinking that it was, inasmuch as twenty centuries ago neither the Grande nor the Piccola Marina, as we see them now, was in existence.

On past the Monacone, we reach, at the base of the Tuoro Grande, a water grotto 200 feet deep, which, in consequence of a barrier of rock across the mouth, can only be entered from the land; it is, so far as is known, without any features of interest. Then as we cross the Cala di Mitromania we catch sight of the cave temple of Mithras, which I have already described, and the fine Arco Naturale, and the mouth of the Grotta Bianca, with many stalactites. Beyond are the Faro and the lofty Salto, the 'locus carnificinæ' of Suetonius. Then passing onwards through the *bocca*, under the wall of one of Lowe's forts, and past the Grotto of the Sea-cows, we skirt the base of San Michele and the Punta Francesco, where in the thirteenth century stood a hospice of the Frate de Minori Conventuali di San Francesco, among the ruins of which has been found a marble inscription

in Gothic characters, resembling those on the monument of Robert the Wise (whose figure is garbed in the dress of the Franciscan order) in the magnificent church of Santa Chiara at Naples.

In five minutes more the *giro* is completed, and I am on shore again at the Grande Marina, within a stone's-throw of Truglio, the site of an old Roman house, where seventy years ago was found a statue with the words 'Julius Salius fecit,' and five other headless ones, the largest of which (now in Naples Museum) is thought to have been a figure of Tiberius. At the Fontana close by, four large cisterns were unearthed in the presence of Francis I. in 1827, together with a porphyry head of a divinity or Egyptian priest. On another occasion a very fine basso-relievo was found representing the feast of Icarius. Under a tile-roofed building the Indian Bacchus is seen in a long robe, with fauns and bacchantes, one of whom is removing his sandals. Icarius and his daughter Erigone, reclining on a couch, are apparently inviting the god to partake of the bread and fruit that lie on a table in front of them.



AMALFI CATHEDRAL.

To face p. 199.

CHAPTER IX.

AMALFI AND THE COAST.

Where the waves and mountains meet,
Where amid her mulberry-trees
Sits Amalfi in the heat,
Bathing ever her white feet
In the tideless summer seas.'

THERE is no coast scenery in Italy, nay, in all Europe, to equal the romantic beauty of the Costiera di Levante, lying between Vietri and the Punta Campanella at the end of the Surrentine peninsula. Its beauty puts into the shade even that other Riviera where sunny Monaco, and wooded Falicon, and lonely Eza, and the sweet Estrelles enchant the eye. Here along this more precipitous southern coast the bays and creeks are narrower, and run up farther into the mountains, filled with water neither blue nor green nor purple, but a marvellous blending of all three, in which

stand the feet of bold and rugged headlands, each with its ruined fortalice. Truly

> *'This is an enchanted land!*
> *Round the headlands far away*
> *Sweeps the blue Salernian bay,*
> *With its sickle of white sand;*
> *Further still and furthermost*
> *On the dim discovered coast*
> *Pæstum with its ruins lies,*
> *And its roses all in bloom*
> *Seem to tinge the fatal skies*
> *Of that lovely land of doom.'*

The little towns that dot the jagged shore are parted from each other by half a hundred glens, and are bright with coloured houses, round which there is abounding life of fisher-folk, with much chatter of bare-legged washerwomen, and troops of merry mendicant urchins on the *marinellas* and the worm-eaten moles.

I have just come back to my lotos-garden from a week's walk over ground which I would fain commend to anyone who is not afraid of being abroad with only a comb and a tooth-brush, or of a tramp in the sunshine of South Italy of some ten or twelve miles a day. It must be remembered, however, that the road along the Salernian gulf is almost shadeless for twelve hours out of the twenty-four, and that the trip should be made, if possible, not later in the year than April or May.

Some idea of the main features of the road may be obtained by tracing on a sheet of paper the outline of your outspread fingers, and imagining a lofty mountainous spur running along the length of each, with a fishing village in each fork of the phalanges, and a ruined tower on each finger-nail. The windings are such that you frequently look across a ravine a few hundred yards wide at an opposite point in the road which it takes you an hour to reach; and at the end of four or five hours' steady tramp you find yourself just nicely abreast of a white fort which you fancied you had left safely in your rear yesterday evening.

Leaving Capri (which after awhile one gets naturally to call Crapi, after the manner of the islanders), the early morning boat landed me at Massalubrense, whence a lovely three miles' walk leads to Sorrento, backed by the fantastic peaks of the Sant' Angelo mountains, under the shelter of which lies the broad *piano*, dappled with a score of *borghi* and *casali*, girt about with olive and vine, and glistening orange and pale waxen lemon, with fig and pomegranate, and rich with the outpoured wealth of Nature's cornucopia, a very garden of plenty. All is brimful of life and beauty, from yonder upland that peeps through a gossamer scarf of light golden cloud, down through orchard and

garden to where Vico and Meta and Carotta look out upon the blue waters of the bay. The scene is one quite beyond the power of my pen to describe, and, moreover, is familiar enough to thousands of Englishmen. They who have seen it for themselves would justly scorn any attempt to paint it in words; and they, less happy ones, who can only visit it through the dull medium of a circulating library would be none the better for a page of superlatives.

Across the 'aquæ tremulum lumen' is a charming view of the curving shores of the great bay; but neither Ischia nor Capri is visible, notwithstanding the graceful fiction of the authoress of 'Agnes of Sorrento.' The town itself is about as dull as they make them, a truly excellent retreat wherein to make *kief à la Moslem* and to live the contemplative life. Think not that the lotos-eater can therefore be happy in Sorrento. He needs the sun in daily shine all the year round, and Sorrento looks too much towards the north for that; and what sun does shine in its neighbourhood during winter is tempered and curtailed by the rising ground between Campanella and Sant' Angelo. Between November and Easter Sorrento is often damp and cold. Silius Italicus did indeed sing of

'*Zephyro Surrentum molle salubri;*'

and Torquato Tasso, whose birth-house now lies under the blue water at the foot of the cliffs, did say that its air was enough to make man immortal. But that was some time ago, and the poet is not among us now as a living proof of the truth of his boast. He found the stress and shock of life too much for his exquisitely sensitive and undisciplined nature. All the world knows how, enslaved by superstitious terrors, the poor overwrought lad flung himself into the arms of the Inquisition. One of the few humane and sensible things that that august body ever did was to look upon Tasso as a victim of hypochondria and hopeless love, and to shut him up out of harm's way in Ferrara, the lordly home of the House of Este, where now you may see his little cell in the Ospedale Sant' Anna, with Byron and many a smaller name inscribed upon the walls. Then, after seven pining years, the song-bird left his cage and fled in a shepherd's dress hither to Sorrento, to the house of his widowed sister, Cornelia, and came at last to his death in a convent on the Janiculan hill in Rome on the eve of the day on which his brows were to have been encircled with the laurel crown of Italian poesy.

I have never been able to discover anything of man's handiwork worth looking at in Sorrento

except the statue of the poet, and that other one of the archbishop and patron Sant' Antonino, who a thousand years ago and more administered a sound thrashing to Prince Sicardo of Benevento, and so saved Sorrento out of his hands. There are a few bright little *tarsia*, or inlaid wood shops, one or two silk stores, and a crowd of bright-faced, dark-eyed lazy loafers, who talk much in guttural grunts and the harshest of dialects, and speak of dying as going to *la patria*, and in whose veins runs some of the bluest blood of old Spain—a relic of the seventeenth-century days, when many a proud hidalgo and his dissolute court from over the water made their viceregal *villeggiatura* here. Ever and anon a less lovely object meets the eye in the shape of some wretched creature, a perfect Mount Morgan to his relatives, whose outward seeming is more like an octopus than a man, with shapeless, sinewless tentacles, and legs like cork-screws.

The way from Sorrento to the Salernian gulf, across the hills by Meta and Arbore, is a route that can be recommended only to such as do not object to a rocky stairway 2,000 feet high, which leads down to Positano from the hamlet of S. Maria a Castello. I do; and therefore I prefer the new carriage-road which winds round

the base of the Conti delle Fontanelle, and then trends onwards along a coast of the most ravishing beauty to Positano (city of Poseidon), more grandly situated in my eyes than any other town in these parts. On the right hand as you approach it lie the three shadeless islets of the Sirens, called anciently Parthenope, Ligeia, and Leucoria, but now Isola di San Pietro, Il Castelletto, and Rotonda, or, in the common talk of the people, Li Galli, from their fancied resemblance to ships under sail. It is too warm a day to trouble my head about the vexed question of where the three singing sisters really had their habitation, whence with 'sweet, soul-piercing strain' they lured the mariner to his doom; so that

'If unawares come floating on the wind
That clear sweet music which the Sirens pour,
He who hath quaffed it with his ear shall find
No voice, no welcome, on his native shore,
Shall on his dear wife gaze, and lisping babes, no more.'

Between the conflicting claims of Jason and the 'many-wiled' Ulysses and Circe and the Argonauts, it is a hard matter to pick one's way, and it is much less trouble simply to look at the isles where they lie basking 'on the marble mere,' and try to fancy that I can hear

'The sharp clear twang of the golden chords
Run up the ridged sea,'

or, in a more matter-of-fact way, catch the echoes of the sighs and groanings of the naughty old Amalfitan doges who ate their hearts out there almost within sight of the scene of their misdeeds.

Positano was once a stirring port in the Angevine times, but there is now nothing in the town to attract the stranger except the magnificent scenery, and the comfortable beds at the Hôtel du Paradis down near the sea. It is well, however, not to linger between the sheets, but to start betimes in the morning, so that the long winding road round the ravine towards Vettica and the Capo Sottile may be tackled before the sun is high. Onwards past Praiano, beautiful den of thieves, and Furore, and Capo di Conca, and Tovere, till a break in the road is reached beyond which it is impossible for carriages to pass. Indeed, anything less active than a goat will find considerable difficulty in getting round one or two corners, where there is nothing but the barest, narrowest, slipperiest track on the face of the cliff. The completion of the road on into Amalfi has been promised by the Greek calends, and there is every prospect, judging from my own observation, that the engagement will be punctually fulfilled, for in two places I saw a woman and a boy

seated on a reversed wheelbarrow actively engaged in surveying the scene. The truth is that Italy, with an annual deficit of two millions, has no money to spend on public works at the present moment; and, moreover, unexpected difficulties have arisen as the result of certain engineering errors which it will take some time to remedy. In one place a tunnel was begun at each end of a mountainous spur, in which after long hard work the borings were found heaven knows how many mètres apart in the centre—a contrast to the masterly skill with which the St. Gothard tunnel was triumphantly accomplished after nine miles of burrowing in the bowels of the Alps. Thousands of tons of rock have yet to be blasted, and from the present look of things it must be some years before anything on wheels can traverse the whole route which leads down to the diminished glories of Amalfi.

> *'To him who sails*
> *Under the shore, a few white villages*
> *Scattered above, below, some in the clouds,*
> *Some on the margin of the dark-blue sea,*
> *And glittering thro' their lemon groves, announce*
> *The region of Amalfi.'*

Among all the fallen cities of the world, there are few that have less to show for their old renown than this dilapidated port, which for generations

shared with Naples the history of South Italy—Amalfi, with her ducal line of 'defensores fidei' and her fifty thousand inhabitants, now dwindled down to a handful of macaroni, paper, and soap makers—the last-named article solely, I imagine, for exportation. Far indeed have fame and fortune fled from a city that six hundred years ago was a strongly-fortified arsenal, the first naval *entrepôt* in Europe, the seat of a supreme court for the settlement of maritime affairs from the Dardanelles to Cadiz, and whose 'tabula Amalphitana' supplanted the ancient 'lex Rhodia.' But now

> *'Fathoms deep beneath the seas*
> *Lie the ancient wharves and quays,*
> *Swallowed by the engulfing waves;*
> *Silent streets and vacant halls,*
> *Ruined roofs and towers and walls,*
> *Hidden from all mortal eyes,*
> *Deep the sunken city lies:*
> *Even cities have their graves!'*

Up from the ancient mole and the old boat-house, built long before the first Crusade, and the little strip of shingly beach, which the lazy wavelets of the tideless sea seem to woo with languorous caress, the town, that looks as if it had been builded by swallows, stretches picturesquely along the ravine of the Canneto, its gleaming flat-roofed

houses piled up and clambering over one another, as if to catch every ray of sunshine. Fair as the outside of the city is at all times, it never looks by the garish light of day as it looks in the affluent moonbeams, when every house and cupola and tower stands out with a tender gleam as if fashioned of alabaster, a Fata Morgana rather than a city of solid stone.

In the narrow oriental-looking streets, dappled with cool shadows, where

> *'In the middle of the town,*
> *From its fountains in the hills,*
> *Tumbling through the narrow gorge,*
> *The Canneto rushes down,*
> *Turns the great wheels of the mills,*
> *Lifts the hammers of the forge,'*

there is no lack of large-limbed sun-tanned sailors, 'strong rogues and masterless,' dressed, like their boats on this afternoon of the Easter festival, in all colours of the rainbow, and with voices that cut the air harshly as if hailing a ship in the 'roaring forties,' though they are counted the best singers between Pæstum and Posilipo. The tawny, black-eyed women are nursing their mummied infantile bantlings, or filling their pitchers at the quaint stone fountain in the square, or gossiping in accents that have little of the softness of the true

Italian tongue; while the winsome and well-made children sprawl on the church steps, or splash about like mahogany porpoises in the sea, or chase one another in and out of the narrow vaulted *vicoli*, or, at sight of their lawful prey, pester the wandering stranger, and bar his steps at every turn with their shrill, shameless cry of 'Signur! qual' co! qual' co! Signur!' Two golden rules must be learnt and acted upon here, as everywhere else from Pæstum to Po: 1, Keep your temper under all possible circumstances; 2, smell as little as you can. For the weather-worn stones in these antique beauty-spots are redolent of other things than ruin and romance; the shore is the shore of a fairy realm, but the smells are the smells of Italy.

Here up in a quiet corner are a couple of youngsters, scarcely breeched, playing the national game of *mora*, the old Roman *micare digitis*, probably the most ancient pastime on earth. It certainly might have been played in Eden or the ark, for nothing is wanted for it but fingers and thumbs, which were made before forks, or Tubal Cain's discus, or Jubal's box of whistles; indeed, there is mention of the game as played in this Magna Græcia many centuries before Christ. Two players, with their bodies bent and necks craned like game-cocks on the warpath, keep on jerking

out at the same moment with amazing quickness one or more of their right-hand fingers, each calling out as he does it any number he likes between two and ten. The object is to guess the number held out collectively by both ; thus, I hold out 3, and cry 8 ; the other fellow holds out only 2, and I lose, because 3 plus 2 make 5. If he chance to cry 5, he scores a point, and 'chalks it down' by holding up a left-hand finger. Instead of 10, 'Tutti' is called. The excitement often waxes intense as the game proceeds at a speed that the eyes and ears of the stranger try in vain to keep pace with.

Not twenty yards away from these precocious young gamblers stands the heart of Amalfi, the grand old cathedral church of Sant' Andrea, half Saracen, half Lombard, at the top of a long flight of steps on the east side of the piazza. Built near the end of the eleventh century, when Robert Guiscard and his fiery brothers were setting their heels on the necks of the emperors of the Orient, the church is approached by sixty broad stairs of stone, leading to a noble portico of white and black marble, adorned for many years with crumbling columns from Pæstum, that are now removed and stored away in the cloisters. The fine campanile, erected a century later than the main building, still

retains its old Greek spoils from the city of Neptune. In the centre of the portico are the celebrated huge bronze doors from Byzantium, on which, though most of the silver work has been worn away, we can still decipher the jingling inscription that perpetuates the name of their donor: '*Hoc opus fieri jussit pro redemptione animæ suæ Pantaleo filius Mauri de Pantaleone de Mauro de Maurone Comite*.' This same Pantaleone was the eldest of six sons, who, in the words of a chronicler of that time, 'kept himself apart from the wickedness of his people, and walked righteously before God, doing much good at Salerno, lodging in his house all those who were bound on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and providing them with money and all things needful for their journey. He also founded hospitals at Antioch and Jerusalem, and thus spread his fame far and wide, being well spoken of by all men.' The doors are wrought in small panels, containing sacred subjects incised with precious metals.

Inside the building a peculiar feature, which does not immediately catch the eye, is formed by a second aisle on the north side, walled off from the real aisle, but so connected with it by passages as to form what is to all intents and purposes a separate church. In one of these passages stand, one

over the other, two mutilated sarcophagi of very ancient date, one representing the Rape of Proserpine and the other a hymeneal festival, said to be that of Peleus and Thetis, in the presence of the assembled hierarchy of Olympus. A very large antique porphyry vase, formerly used as a font (so says Baedeker), is to be seen in the little old baptistery, from the gate of which the whole interior of the church looks very imposing, with its richly designed old marble columns adorned with mosaic arabesques that lead the eye up to the gaudy gilded roof. In the crypt below is preserved the inestimable treasure of the body (or what there may be left) of S. Andrew, brought here from Constantinople in 1211, and shamefully mutilated two hundred years later by Pius II., who cut off the head and carried it to S. Peter's. On the *festa* of the 26th of June crowds of visitors take the place of the pilgrims who used formerly to come from the neighbouring districts to partake in the benefits of the greasy *manna di Sant' Andrea*, which was wont to exude for the cure of all bodily ailments, and was sold (we may be sure not under cost price) by the clerical authorities. Apparently, however, the saint has exhausted his stock, for now, if you question the sacristan about it, he answers, with a shake of the head, 'Non che più.'

A similar wonder is to be seen in the Cappella di San Michele, on the top of Sant' Angelo, where the sweat of the archangel's effigy, which perspires freely every year on the 1st of August, is collected in cotton wool and sold to the faithful at so much per ounce. To what use it is afterwards put I have not been able to ascertain. Ignoring the irreverence that first prompted the idea of making a living out of the sweat of an angel's brow, I cannot but express my surprise that while the ecclesiastical purveyors of the fraud were about it they did not arrange for the exudation on, say, the 1st of January, instead of in the dog-days—it certainly would have been a shade more miraculous; or even the 1st of April would have precluded the idea of its being possibly due to any natural causes.*

There is also a colossal bronze statue of the apostle, fashioned by Michelangelo Maccarino, and given to the church by Philip III. of Spain. So far as can be seen by the dim light of a taper, the dropping tears of which are still *en évidence* on the sleeve of my coat, the face is that of an old man deeply worn by suffering and world-weariness.

* I am reminded of Sir John Maundeville's description of the *myron* exuding from the relics of S. Catharine on Mount Sinai: 'Ther gothe out,' he says, 'a lytylle Oyle as thoughe it were a maner swetynge, that is nouther lyche to Oyle ne to Bawme; but it is fulle swete of smelle.'



GARDEN OF THE CAPPUCCINI CONVENT, AMALFI.

To face p. 215.

The 'silent streets' of the poet I found to be a figment shattered by the sharp cries and general racket in this higgledy-piggledy little city, that made me after awhile glad to seek the quiet seclusion of the Capuchin monastery (with its world-famous view), now a most comfortable hostelry 230 feet above the sea, but built originally for the Cistercians in 1212. In 1583 it was handed over to the Capuchins, and in later times was used as a government naval school.

'Lord of vineyards and of lands,
Far above the convent stands;
On its terraced walk aloof
Leans a monk with folded hands,
Placid, satisfied, serene,
Looking down upon the scene,
Over wall and red-tiled roof;
Wondering unto what good end
All the toil and traffic tend,
And why all men cannot be
Free from care and free from pain,
And the sordid love of gain,
And as indolent as he.'

Dismissing the passing thought that so far as regards the indolence I should have made an excellent monk in the good old days, I sit in this enchanting spot and turn over the pages of the Cavaliere Camere's fascinating 'Storia d' Amalfi,'

which reads less like sober history than a brilliant legend aglow with the deeds of a score of heroes whose names the world will not willingly let die. The foundations of her illustrious republic were laid upon the ruins of the Greek empire, at the time when Naples was shaking off the last shackle of her Byzantine masters. The doges of Amalfi were rulers far and wide over the surrounding districts, and the fame of her commerce was in every port in the East—'floruit et potens fuit tam in terrestribus quam in marinis,' says a chronicler. In 868, when Athanasius, brother of Duke Gregory and bishop of Naples, was shut up by his nephew Sergius in the castle of San Salvatore (now the Castel dell' Ovo), the men of Amalfi came valiantly to his rescue and routed the Neapolitans and Saracens, and set him free; for which timely aid Capri and the Siren Isles were added by Louis II. to the possessions of the doges. 'No city,' says Gibbon, 'was more abundantly provided with gold, silver, and the objects of precious luxury. The mariners who swarmed in her port excelled in the theory and practice of navigation and astronomy; and the discovery of the compass, which has opened the globe, is due to their ingenuity or good fortune. Their trade was extended to the coasts, or at least to the commodities of Africa,

Arabia and India, and their settlements in Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria acquired the privileges of independent colonies. After three hundred years of prosperity Amalfi was oppressed by the arms of the Normans, and sacked by the jealousy of Pisa; but the poverty of a thousand fishermen is yet dignified by the remains of an arsenal, a cathedral, and the palaces of royal merchants.'*

'*The time has been*
When, on the quays along the Syrian coast,
'Twas asked, and eagerly, at break of dawn,
"What ships are from Amalfi?" when her coins,
Silver and gold, circled from clime to clime;
From Alexandria southward to Sennaar,
And eastward, through Damascus and Cabul
And Samarcand, to thy great wall, Cathay.'

Amalfi would for ever deserve the gratitude of mankind at large, and mariners in particular, if she had done nothing but give birth to Flavio

* The historian is but paraphrasing the testimony of William the Apulian:

'*Nulla magis locuples argento, vestibus, auro*
Partibus innumeris; hac plurimus urbe moratur
Nauta maris cœlique vias aperire peritus.
Huc et Alexandri diversa feruntur ab urbe
Regis, et Antiochi. Gens hæc freta plurima transit.
His Arabes, Indi, Siculi nascuntur et Afri.
Hæc gens est totum prope nobilitata per orbem,
Et mercando ferens, et amans mercata referre.'

Gioja, not, indeed, the discoverer of the polarity of the magnetic needle, known for many ages previously in the East, but the first to mark the compass-card with its points. The use of the magnetic needle in Europe is mentioned as early as 1190 in a satirical political poem entitled 'La Bible,' written by a Provençal; and Dante, contemporary with Gioja, sings of the 'needle which points to the star.' But it is to the Amalfitan and none other that western mariners are indebted for the universal use of the compass. 'Prima dedit nautis,' says Beccadelli of Palermo (*circa* 1400), 'usum magnetis Amalphis;' and Klaproth adds: 'Inventrix præclara fuit magnetis Amalphis.'

In 1131, six years after it had been annexed together with Naples by Roger II. of Sicily, Amalfi was desolated by the men of Pisa—'popolo potentissimo per terra e per mare'—for whom a like and even worse fate was in store a hundred and fifty years later, at the hands of Genoa; when, after the bloody battle of Meloria, an island cliff near Leghorn, eleven thousand of their citizens were carried to starvation in a Genoese dungeon. 'It is certain,' says Muratori, 'that the greater part of them, by little and little, died of want; whence arose the saying, *Chi vuol veder Pisa, vada a Genova*—Who would see Pisa, must go to Genoa.

From that battle, and so great loss of her noblest citizens, Pisa could never lift up her head, and went on decaying,' until she bowed to the yoke of Florence. As for Amalfi, her ruin was completed in 1343 by a power more terrible than that of her fierce neighbours. It is from the pen of Petrarch that we have a pathetic narration of the awful catastrophe which brought the city tumbling about the ears of its luckless inhabitants, and cut off for ever by a gigantic landslip the adjoining port of Atrani. In a letter written to Cardinal Colonna on the very next day (November 27, 1343), when the groans of the dying and the disconsolate are still ringing in his ears, the poet-lover of Laura tells how for many days past the whole coast had been in a ferment, through the utterances of a certain bishop, who had predicted that on a certain day the wrath of heaven should fall in punishment upon the people for their sins. So not a few fell to repenting, and 'gave up every other consideration to the grand concerns of religion, imploring the mercy of heaven and its forgiveness of past offences.' Some, however, of the cleverer ones in the community laughed at the predicted doom, putting little faith in what they looked upon as the hallucination of an astrologer; but they were soon to be undeceived. 'As night came on,' says

Petrarch, who is relating what took place over the hills in Naples, where he was staying, 'the sky was more than usually serene. My servant went to bed immediately after supper, while I, for my part, purposed to stay up and watch the setting of the moon in her last quarter, as she hid herself behind the hill of San Martino. Then I stretched myself on my bed and was fast falling asleep, when I was roused by the sound of an earthquake. The casement was burst open, the light in my chamber was extinguished, and the whole house shook to its foundations. Assailed between sleeping and waking by the terror of impending destruction, I ran to the cloisters of the monastery in which I reside, and was met by the abbat with his monks in procession, who, terrified by the tempest, were bearing the holy cross and relics of saints with torches into the church. Inspired with courage, I accompanied them thither, and we all with one accord threw ourselves prostrate on the ground, and with loud uplifted voices implored the divine mercy and forgiveness, expecting every moment that the sacred building would fall and bury us in the ruins. The long night seemed by magic art to be prolonged to twice its actual duration, and when morning came we knew it by the clock rather than by any light in the firmament. The

priests vested themselves for mass, while I, made bold by despair, mounted on horseback, resolved to see for myself, even though I should perish. Who ever heard of such things as I then beheld? In the midst of the port were an infinite number of poor wretches scattered about in the sea and struggling to gain the shore, who, by the violence and fury of the waves, were battered about, till they looked like so many eggs dashed to pieces on the beach. The whole space was strewn with bodies, some with their skulls fractured, others with broken limbs or their bowels gushing out; nor were the screams of men and women less terrific than the uproar of the elements. Soon the dreadful rumour came to our ears that the ground on which we were treading had been undermined by the sea, and was beginning to open. We fled precipitately and saved ourselves; but the spectacle I then witnessed was the most terrible one ever beheld by mortal eyes: the heavens commingled, the sea implacably turbulent, the waves mountains high, and in colour neither black nor blue, but perfectly white like hills of snow, rolling over the whole expanse from Capri to Naples.'

At Amalfi the results were eminently disastrous. A huge mass of mountain rock, on the end of which now stands a quiet cloistered inn, slid from

the heights above and severed Atrani from her twin sister, Atrani that nestles under frowning cliffs, and looks as if it had slipped from out of the deep ravine and paused before taking a final plunge into the sea. Overhead are the picturesque old strongholds of La Scala and San Lazzaro, with Ravello, and Pontone, and a score or more of scattered hamlets dotted like snowflakes along the lower slopes of Monte Cerreto. Down below, in the bend of the bay towards the bold Capo d' Orso, lie vine-clad Minori, and Maiori with its guardian monastery, and San Nicholà, the ruined castle of the Piccolomini. Half hidden away in the town stands the venerable church of San Salvatore di Biretto, with fine antique bronze doors, the gift, like those of Amalfi, of the Pantaleone family, and bearing the date of our William II.'s accession. Here in this diminutive Westminster Abbey, the doges of Amalfi were crowned, and here after much trouble and turmoil many of them were laid to rest.

THE RUIN OF AMALFI.

On God's day in Amalfi, at high noon,
When silence held the quays and archèd ways
Dappled with shadow, and the sunlit square
Lay all a-tremble by the moss-clad fount,
That to the tinkle of its silver feet

Danced shimmering : in Andrea's stately fane,
Where over arch and aisle and marbled shrine
The Sun-god's shafts lay golden, stood a throng
Of glittering nobles and brown fisher folk,
And comely maids and matrons, while outrang
Through echoing walls the passionate voice of one,
Heaven's minister :
'Repent ! ye fools and blind !
And bow your stubborn hearts, ere swiftly falls
The bolt sped by His might and majesty
Whose mercy is outwearied by your sins !
This morn at yonder altar, as I clasped
The sacred circle of the living Christ
In these vile hands, and round me knelt the few
(How few ye know) who daily bend the knee
To greet His coming : into my trancèd soul
There slid a voice that smote not ears of sense,
Nor moved an echo ; words of dolorous doom,
Long stayed in mercy by Love's piercèd hands,
Swept through my brain like moan of sobbing winds
That chafe and vex the calm of crystal seas.
No longer I—whose weak voice ye have scorned,
Hugging your lustful luxuries—but He,
The Master, speaks, whose wrath perchance your tears
E'en now may stay : else, ere yon hurrying orb
Hath three times kissed the ocean's western rim,
Earth's hungry jaws shall open : at your feet
Hell's yawning portals belch forth living fires,
Escapeless, all-devouring : like an autumn leaf
Amalfi's pride shall fade, and all her ways
Stand sorrowing. I have said.'
Forth passed the throng
Back to Life's burning ways, and no more recked
The preacher's words than as chance water spilled
Which none need stoop to gather. Here and there

A soul sin-vexed made moan, and some were wroth,
But most made jest, 'Poor dreamer! too much prayer
And fast have touched him: let us eat and drink
Lest we too brain-sick grow! If life be short,
Why shadow o'er with death?' Some, hiding fear,
Paced where the 'sliding silver' of the sea
Lapped softly round a hundred shining keels,
And proudly eyed the tapering masts that oft
Had rocked and strained 'mong breezy isles of Greece,
In Syrian ports, by burning Tripoli,
Or Adria's treacherous sands, or Calpe's rock.
'What might of earth or ocean dares to vex
Our stout-built galleys?' Then with eye upturned
To the dazzling dome, ''Tis a fair autumn tide:
Amalfi sits a queen'—and went their way,
To count their ducats ere they slept.
That night,
When all men slept save one, the saintly seer,
Who with blanched lips laid fast to blessed cross
Through the long hours had prayed and agonized,
'Father, if it be possible!'—then fall'n
Outstretched in voiceless pleadings—as he lay,
There stole a whisper through the midnight calm,
That stirred the dry dead vineyards and the leaves
Of scented lemon groves; then deepening moved
The sultry shadows of the purple night,
Blent with low dropping thunder in the hills,
And sweeping onset of the rattling host
Of hail battalions. Through the alarmèd air,
That throbbed and panted 'neath the envenomed stabs
Of riving shafts from Heaven's high armoury,
Down rushed the shrieking Storm Fiend from his lair
In Scala's crags, and lashed Canneto's flood,
And churned the sea to snowflakes; and the earth
With mighty groan, as when a Titan dies,

Laid bare her vitals to the trembling stars,
And sank in ruin.
Then leaped forth a cry
That lordly Capri heard, and Circe's isle,
And the lone Siren rocks, and Neptune's shrine,*
And many a league of startled sea, to where
Etna's great heart throbbed answer.
And at dawn,
Where heaps lay thick of bruised and battered men,
They found the 'dreamer' clinging to his cross,
Scathless and smiling: but himself had passed
To where no earthwrought symbol veils the Christ.

* The temple of Neptune at Pæstum.

CHAPTER X.

FISHER-KING AND BANDIT.

'*Paupertas ac necessitas ab una parte regnat: altera satietas ac superbia.*'—DION. HALICAR.

To Amalfi, for the last two centuries and a half, the honour has belonged, by popular consent, of having given birth to a very different kind of hero from Flavio Gioja, in the person of Tommaso Aniello, or Mas' Aniello, as he was commonly called,

'*Who slept a fisher lad and woke a king*':

Masaniello, the idol of the unwashed and the autocrat of the gutter, whose meteoric flight from a hovel to a throne, his short shining at the zenith of his power, his woeful sudden extinguishment, give him a place on one of the most fascinating pages of the romance of history. To-day he is the darling of a hundred thousand hearts; before sun-

down to-morrow they will be searching for his fair young head in the castle moat.

As a matter of fact, the nine-days king and bugbear of tyrants was no more born in Amalfi than 'the first slave-driver of the new world' was born in the isle of Corsica. Although the Amalfitans point out his birth-house in Pontone above the city, there is no doubt that he first saw the light in Naples, where in the registers of S. Catarina, in Foro Magno, his name is entered as having been baptized there on June 29, 1620, the son of Cicco d'Amalfi and Antonia Gargano, living in the Vico Rotto.* The same registers contain the entry of his parents' marriage on February 18, 1620, both inhabitants of Naples—'ambi Napolitani habitano'—a fact which, by a comparison of dates, explains how it was that Tommaso's vindictive royalist foes fastened upon him the opprobrious name of 'un bâtard.' Twenty-one years later there is the record of his marriage with Berardina Pisa on April 25, 1641. He is called Tommas" Aniello d' Amalfi; but the couple are said to be 'ambi Napolitani, habitano a questa parocchia.'

Familiar as the tale is to every schoolboy, I am made bold to skim its stirring episodes once more, in the light thrown upon them by a quaint and

* A copy of the full entry is given by De Rivaz, p. 83.

curious narrative entitled 'Il Mas' Aniello overo discorse narrativi la Sollevatione di Napoli,' written by one Gabriele Tontoli, and dedicated 'Al Sermo Principe D. Giovanni d'Austria,' with the imprint of 1648.

The Spanish Prorex, or Viceroy, in 1647 was Ponce de Léon, Duke of Arcos, a man under whose oppressive rule the Neapolitans were ground down to the last ducat, notwithstanding the privileges that had been granted by Charles V. to his 'fidelissimo popolo Napolitano.' Things, indeed, in Naples were about as bad as they could be. The governor extorted immense sums from the impoverished people, in order to send worthy presents to his master, Philip—*donativi* resembling those that Henry VIII. wrung from his terrified Parliament — which in nineteen years (1628-1647) reached the enormous sum of a hundred million ducats. Justice there was none: not a magistrate was worth his salt (always an expensive article in Naples); not an official in the service of the State but was a venal wretch who had no loftier ambition than to line his own pockets with sequins—a mere sponge (as was said of some in Vespasian's time) 'sopping up the money of the citizens.' Atrocious taxes were laid upon the working classes by nobles who indulged in the

most wanton acts of arbitrary despotism and set the law at defiance. Matters had reached such a climax that bread, of infinite importance to the Neapolitan *lazzarono*, could only be bought at three times its proper price, and money was scarcely in circulation at all. Unable to get bread, the poor wretches filled their bellies with figs and cucumbers, until one fine morning in July they woke and found that a new *gabella*, or tax, had been laid on all fruit and vegetables. This put the fat fairly in the fire: 'Ad extremum sunt populi exitium,' says Tacitus, 'cum extrema onera eis imponuntur.' The hour had come, and also the man, in the person of Masaniello, a mere stripling, 'povero, scalzo, e di bassissima condizione'—in fact, a vendor of fish. Though but young, he was the father of four children, whose mother had been caught in the act of smuggling a handful of meal and thrown into gaol.

Here is a sketch of Masaniello, drawn by one who saw him: 'He was twenty-four years old [*sic*], and married; full of wit and drollery; of a middling stature, and rather thin than fat; with black eyes, and two little brown moustachios. He wore neither shoes nor stockings, and his dress was composed of short linen trousers, a thick shirt, and a sailor's red cap. His aspect was beautiful

and animated.' I have had it in my power within the last few days to confirm the veracity of this sketch—at least, so far as regards Masaniello's looks—inasmuch as I have had an opportunity of seeing the only existing representation of him, in the form of a head that has recently been discovered in a *fondaco* in the Pindone quarter in old Naples. It is known that after his death a statue of the popular idol was put up by some of his admirers, and that it was destroyed by fire a few months later, the Spanish authorities fearing lest his counterfeit presentment should rouse the people to fresh acts of unmannerly insurrection. Accordingly the figure was burnt, and the head, which is now in the possession of a gentleman in Capri, alone remained, showing clear traces of fire, and with the left cheek slightly injured. Otherwise it looks none the worse for its burial of more than two hundred years. The face is a fine one, full of character, and there are the 'two little moustachios' and the 'sailor's cap' mentioned by Tontoli—altogether a very interesting relic. But to my tale.

At the annual *festa* of S. Maria del Carmine, held in Naples on July 17, it was the custom for the young men to get up a sham fight in the market-place, one side representing Turks, the

other Christians. The leaders chosen for this year (1647) were Masaniello and a youth called Pione, by whom an *émeute* was secretly planned, which was hastened by the action of the viceroy in imposing the tax on fruit. Full of wrath at the oppressions of his people and his own private wrongs, Masaniello arose like another Moses, and went the round of the fruit-stalls, calling upon every man who groaned under this last straw to meet him in the Mercato on the next day, and demand the repeal of the *gabella*. Not to be turned from his purpose by a few halting concessions at the hands of the 'eletto del popolo,' he went on with his agitation, and swore not to rest till he was swinging from a gibbet, or till oil was sold in the city at a farthing a measure, meat at threepence a pound, and wine at two grains the bottle; which, says my author, were the exact prices that ruled in Naples during the following year. Masaniello's next practical step was the enrolment of a couple of thousand sturdy young fellows, whom he armed with sticks, with which they set to work to good purpose at a festival held in the church wherein lie the remains of Conradin, last scion of the Hohenstaufens, and close to the entrance of which the body of Masaniello himself was in a few days to be buried.

The authorities appeared on the scene, but got the worst of it; and the crowd, inflamed by a speech from Masaniello, set fire first to the tax-office in the market, and then to every similar building in the city, crying out always: 'Long live the King, and death to all bad governments!' Coming at length to the Castel dell' Ovo, the residence of the viceroy, they demanded an audience, which the cowed satrap gave them through a window, promising a repeal of some of the obnoxious imposts. But the time had gone by for half-measures, and the motley mob came to closer quarters by forcing a way into the castle through the Spanish and German guards, and reached the duke's apartment just as he was in the act of escaping to the church of San Luigi. They surrounded and hustled him, and so far succeeded in terrifying him that he lisped out a solemn promise to give them what they wanted; upon which the volatile ragamuffins fell on their knees before him, and while they scrambled for a handful of sequins he took the opportunity of putting himself at a safe distance up in Sant' Elmo. At his wits' end to know how to quiet the audacious youth who was at that moment *de facto* his master, Ponce de Léon drew up a document, which he sent the Duke of Monteleone to read to the people. One

can imagine how their fury rose to boiling-point when they discovered that the Spaniard had gone back from his word. He had put himself beyond their reach, so all they could do they did: they rolled the poor duke in the dust, after which they rushed down into the city, threw open the prisons, burnt some suspected houses, compelled the soldiers to give up their arms, and finally made a formal proclamation of the fisherman of Amalfi as the 'Capo del popolo.' 'Then,' says our emotional author, 'there ensued a scene that I cannot call to memory without a shudder. The bells all over the city rang loudly to arms, and on every side sounded the discharge of firearms and the shouts of the people.'

That night Masaniello posted guards in the city to frustrate any interference from the troops; and on the next morning, when fruit which had never been handled by the exciseman was being freely hawked in the market, the viceroy sent a propitiatory message to him telling him that all he asked had been now granted. But Masaniello, knowing his strength, now asked for more, and planted cannon at the head of each of the principal streets. The archbishop Filomarini then came to the front with his priests, intending to have recourse to processions in order to distract the

people; but Masaniello briefly told him he had better keep his clergy at home, seeing that blood was up, and he could not answer for their safety. He was pleased also to add that they were at liberty to pray away as much as they liked in the churches. Meanwhile, poor Duke d'Arcos, now shut up in the Castel Nuovo by the port, began to run short of food, which for anyone but a *lazzarono* is a very dreadful thing. He despatched a boat to Sorrento for supplies, but it fell into the hands of the people, and his troubles were further increased by the news that reinforcements of troops from Capua and Caserta had been disarmed by the mob. In vain were all sorts of negotiations bandied about between the viceroy and the archbishop on the one part, and Masaniello on the other. They all came to nothing, as, indeed, Masaniello himself was very near doing; for he found out that Perroni, one of his most trusted confederates, was a renegade of the deepest dye. Being seized by the furious multitude, the wretch, after full confession of his misdeeds, was beheaded in the market-place, and so an end was put to his pretty plot of blowing up a part of the city with 15,000 pounds of powder, 'by which a hundred and fifty thousand men, women, and children would have been blown into the air, besides the numerous

edifices, sacred and profane, situated thereabout.' We need not blame, though we may not commend, the people for accepting the belief that the Spaniards were at the bottom of this bit of devilry, or for their renewed determination to reduce the viceroy to their will. Knowing that the stomach rules the world, and that their foe was already on short commons, they now proceeded, with all the *sang froid* of a water-company, to cut off his water supply.

It was now the fifth day of topsy-turvydom, and Masaniello was on the highest pinnacle of power, with a thousand willing hands eager to execute his lightest order. So far, all was well with him. He kept a cool head, and directed affairs with singular prudence and moderation, and a stern regard for imperial interests as distinguished from the atrocious travesty of local government from which he had revolted. Next day the thinning and thirsting viceroy, now within measurable distance of raging famine, gave in to all the popular demands, and signed a treaty dictated by Masaniello. At two in the afternoon the archbishop met Masaniello at the church, where the new treaty was read and *Te Deum* sung amid wild manifestations of rejoicing. Then Masaniello, mounted on 'un generoso cavallo,' preceded the cardinal towards

the castle; and on reaching the Piazza del Municipio (then much less spacious than now) he turned and addressed the frantic crowd, bidding them repeat after him the names of their three masters, God, Blessed Mary, and the King of Spain. Then he went on: 'I should never have put off my sailor's habit but for the archbishop. I have fished up your liberty out of the rough waters of this poor, troubled city, and I shall go back to sell fish without keeping aught for myself. One thing I ask and entreat of you: that, when I am dead, you will each one say an *Ave* for the rest of my soul. Will you promise me?—will you, will you?' he cried eagerly again and again; and they answered with great shouts. Surely very pathetic words from such lips on that bright summer day in the great fretting heart of Naples. Then in deeper tones: 'I go now to see his Excellency *faccia a faccia*. In an hour I shall be with you again, or at latest by the rising of the sun. If I come not, if when the day dawns I am not with you, know ye that I am betrayed, and that my blood will cry out at your hands! Consume the whole city with fire! Spare none and naught! Promise me this!' And again went up the sibilant roar, the people pledging themselves to revenge him; for their heads were turned pretty much as his was.

The lad then fell at the feet of the viceroy and implored his clemency, but the Spaniard (thoroughly tamed by hunger) raised him and 'embraced him several times.' Then the viceroy not being able to hear the sound of his own voice for the tumultuous acclamations of the people, at a signal from Masaniello a great hush fell instantly over all, to the great wonderment of the duke, who was amazed at his adding a third miracle to Pliny's two, the silence of a woman and a cicada.* Masaniello was then declared to be Captain-General of the city, with the title of 'Most Illustrious,' and was presented with a massive chain of gold; after which he returned in the cardinal's carriage to his own house, and the next morning was soon immersed in the administration of affairs of state. He must have had a busy time of it: 'for,' says Tontoli, 'to describe the deliberations and discourses and designs and incidents of Masaniello during these days one would need a river of ink, and would have to plough, not without shipwreck, a sea of falsehood on all sides.'

But he had reached the turning-point in his strange career. His brain suddenly gave signs of

* Muta cicada pro miraculo est; quod ipsum genus sit garrulum: sic magis admiramur et silentium in fœmina; quod ipsum genus mutabile sit et loquax.—*Pliny, H.N.*, xi. 27.

being overmastered by the giddy height on which he stood; he set noblemen swinging in the market place, became undecided, would give an order one hour and countermand it the next, and soon made it clear to his comrades that the simple champion of their wrongs had developed into a full-blown tyrant. His brother-in-law confessed him mad; and threatened that if he did not mend his ways he would stab him with his own hand. Forty-eight hours before ten thousand hearts had followed him, as 'the heaped waters of the Atlantic follow the moon'—now he had scarcely a friend. But he went on, till he 'per l'infinite sue pazzie e superbia' became obnoxious to the people; he offended everybody 'con parole pungenti,' rode furiously about the crowded streets, thrashed a venerable citizen with a stick, sent the heads of inoffensive folk rolling in dozens along the gutters, or stuck them round his car, and finished up the day by flinging himself into the sea, crying out that his brain was on fire, as no doubt, poor lad! it was. And when he was pulled out (as the issue went, it would have been more merciful to let the kind waves suck his life), those who had loved him best began to fall away from him and to compass his imprisonment. But next day the end came sooner than they looked for it. As he was leaning over

a balcony, heat-stricken and distraught, with head bared to catch the breath of the evening breeze from the bay, four men entered the room and shot him ; a passing butcher cut off his head, which was stuck on a pole and carried round the town, to the tune of 'Masaniello is dead ! Long live the King of Spain !' Then it was flung into the castle moat. The bubble had burst ; the wand of the ill-starred magician was broken. The brimming flood on which he had been whirled over bound and barrier to the steps of a throne had rolled back and left him stranded and alone. He had struck a chord that vibrated through a city ; but the sounding echo which had filled his boyish soul with triumph was now but a thin wailing in the far distance. The fisherman of Amalfi had lived a lifetime of heroism in 'one crowded hour,' an hour in which each beating of his pulse was a blow struck at the fetters of liberty. Was there ever, think you, a more pitiful commingling of heroics and hysterics ?

When he was dead a reaction came, and having fished up his head, they laid it with his body, and set it upon a purple-vested bier, with a crown of laurel, and a sceptre in his hand, and carried him from end to end of Naples, amid the doleful lamentations of the people for whom (may I not say it ?) he had died ; and they buried him where you may see

a tall broken slab of marble by the door of Santa Maria del Carmine, near the Mercato ; and all that is left of him is the dry record in the church book, '16 Luglio 1647. Tommas' Aniello d'Amalfi, marito di Berardina Pisa, passò della presente vita et fu sepolto al Carmine.'

From Atrani a good road winds up along the ravine of the Dragone, by walls draped with maidenhair, to the lofty old town of Ravello, that once numbered its people by scores of thousands, but is now given over to semi-desolation. The cathedral of S. Pantaleone, in which in 1156 the haughty Nicholas Brakespear, Adrian IV., said mass before six hundred nobles, is of extreme interest, with its fine bronze-figured doors in fifty-four compartments, the gift in 1179 of Sergio Muscettola and his wife Sigelgaita. On the south side of the navè is a superb ambo on six spiral columns, with a medallion of the donor. Opposite is a pulpit adorned with a realistic delineation of the wayward Jonah's hazardous adventures.*

An excellent lunch may be had at the Pension Palumbo, of which the *salle-à-manger* was once the bishop's chapel. Then the ancient palace of Nicholà Rufalo, Duke of Sora, should be seen, with its Saracenic cloisters and carven fern leaves, and

* See the cover of this volume.

haunting memories of the mediæval kings and pontiffs who once found a home within its walls. Then, by the steep rocky path, *à l'escalier*, a descent may be made down the cool eastern face of the mountain, and so through a wealth of lemons to the most charming Hôtel Torre, beyond Minori, where, just cheerfully tired, I find a bed that woos me to delicious repose, lulled by the plash of the salt sea waves a hundred feet below.

The next day betimes I tear myself from the society of Soldini, most courteous of hosts, and tramp on eastwards past the Capo d'Orso, the scene of a fierce sea-fight between the French under Filipino Doria and the fleet of Charles V. under Don Hugo de Monçada; past Erchie, the site of a temple to Hercules, and the old pirates' nest of Cetara, that now gives shelter to nothing more desperate than anchovies, and so through dull Vietri to duller Salerno,

> '*Where on each hand the shore puts forth a wing*
> *And clasps the bay with headlands.*'

Here, as at Amalfi, the departed glories of the once-renowned school of medicine are hidden away almost beyond recognition. The streets (I do but speak as I found them) are unattractive, and the sea-front looks tame after the loveliness I have left behind me. The harbour in which, 800 years ago,

Roger of Sicily cast anchor with his galleys, and extorted an oath of fidelity from the nobles, is now little more than a lagoon half choked with sand; along the margin of which runs the Corso Garibaldi, or Marina, laid out with flower-beds and pepper-trees, and the usual appallingly cold marble seats, and with an absolutely ridiculous statue of Carlo Pisacana, the '*precursore di Garibaldi.*'

There is no disguising the fact that Salerno, with 'Ichabod' on its brow, is a desperately, not to say an intolerably, dull place of sojourn. Were it not for its history, and for the accident that it lies on the road to wonderful Pæstum, few, I imagine, would ever pay it a second visit. Of the past there is abundance to meditate upon. From yonder old Lombard citadel 900 feet up in the air, under whose walls Robert Guiscard received his death-wound, down to the stones of the crumbling mole, there is not a rood without its cluster of withered memories that carry us to stormy times when Salerno had much to do with the making of history in these parts. For of old she was the very 'fons medicinæ,' as Petrarch called her, a city in which, according to Gibbon, 'in the intercourse of peace and war a spark of knowledge had been kindled and cherished. Here,' he adds, 'was a school, the first that arose in the

darkness of Europe, consecrated to the healing art ; and a crowd of patients of the most eminent rank and most distant climates visited it.' It was 'an illustrious city in which the men were honest and the women beautiful,' according to the testimony of William the Apulian :

> '*Urbs Latii non est hac delitiosior urbe,*
> *Frugibus, arboribus, vino redundat ; et unde*
> *Non tibi poma, nuces, non pulchra palatia desunt,*
> *Non species muliebris abest probitasque virorum.*'

Of all those stirring wealthy times the only remaining mark is the cathedral of San Matteo, entered through a spacious peristyle girt with ancient columns brought by Guiscard from Pæstum, and sarcophagi of heroes whose names together with their deeds have long since passed into oblivion. Here, again, are bronze doors of the famed Byzantine work, which once, no doubt, were richly beautiful, but now, like everything else around, look faded and time-worn. Inside is a queer jumble of all sorts of pagan and Christian relics, from the body of the apostolic 'publican' to a posse of dancing bacchanals. The two ambones, the screen, and the archiepiscopal throne, decorated with superb mosaic work, were put here by Giovanni of Procida, the bitter foe of the Angevine Charles. To the right of the high altar

is the tomb of Cardinal Carafa—'cui libertas ecclesiastica cordi fuit'—and hard by is the last resting-place on earth of the fiery Hildebrand, the founder of the papal monarchy, and the guest in Salerno of Robert Guiscard, who survived him but two months. On the tomb of the great pontiff is the inscription, with the date of his death (May 25, 1085):

'Gregorio vii Soanen. Pont. Opt. Max.
Eccl. libert. vindici acerrimo assertori constantiss. qui dum Rom. Pont. autoritatem adversus Henrici perfidiam strenue tuetur. Salerni sancte decubuit.

In 1578, when the sepulchre was restored by archbishop Colonna, the body arrayed in its pontifical vestments was found in perfect condition after its long sleep of five hundred years. A few more tombs and marbles, some pictures, a handsome theatre, and an exhilarating *vino d' Irni*, exhaust the attractions of Salerno, and it is without a sigh, except at the size of my hotel bill, that I turn my back upon the place, once the scene of the exploits of many bold brigands, who have in these degenerate days adopted the less trenchant *rôle* of hotel-keepers.

Foremost in defiance of the law and in his contempt of danger was Michele Pezza, better known as Fra Diavolo, who for many years at the

end of the last century kept his name up as a terror to all travellers among the hills that stretch from Vesuvius to Salerno. He was the eldest of the seven sons of a stocking-maker, from the restraints of which honest but unromantic industry Master Michele broke away at the age of sixteen, and tramped off to where the famous Scarpi and his bandits were encamped in the woods above Castellammare. The robber-chief received the lad kindly, and upon his earnest entreaties admitted him as a member of the felonious brotherhood, who, according to the *Giornale dei Tribunali* of that date, were just then 'bringing desolation to the surrounding places.' Pezza soon won his spurs by the dexterous audacity with which he planned and carried out the capture of a celebrated gold statue of the Madonna, which was the boast and pride of the convent of Santa Marta, among the hills above Vico Equense. Scarpi had long set his heart upon making himself master of this trophy, but had repeatedly been foiled through the vigilance of its custodians. Unable to lay hands upon it by stratagem, he resolved at length to seize it by force, but at the last moment was deserted by his band, who would have nothing to do with cutting the throats of priests and nuns. Michele Pezza, however, was not to be gainsaid,

and, disguising himself as a novice, he presented himself before the Mother Superior, who, according to the usual custom, shut him up in solitude for three days that he might prepare himself by prayer and fasting for admission into the order. It chanced to be in the autumn of the year, when the peasants from the country round brought in their tithes and offerings after an abundant harvest, and when, as a consequence, the community was somewhat disturbed from the wonted routine of its quiet daily life by many coming and going. This was all in favour of the young traitor, who, after dark, managed to find his way into the chapel, laid hands on the statue, and concealed it for safety under the straw in an ox-cart. He then informed the good mother that he had mistaken his vocation, and, leaving the convent, hastened to put Scarpi on the track of the owner of the cart as he was returning to his home at Fornacelle. All went well for the brigands, and the statue was carried off, to the immense consternation of the neighbourhood and the glorification of Pezza, who soon afterwards, when Scarpi had been shot by a company of gendarmes, was unanimously elected leader of the band and christened Fra Diavolo, a name by which he was ever afterwards known.

His raids soon grew so destructive that a perfect

reign of terror set in. No sooner did the poor countryfolk hear that he was at hand than they fled for dear life, leaving their goods and chattels at his mercy. The government offered a reward of 400 ducats for his head, and sent bodies of troops, who searched the hills in every direction, but with no result beyond that of adding daily to Fra Diavolo's feats of daring rapine. Again and again death stared him in the face, but he never failed to extricate himself by his coolness and audacity. On one occasion, disguised as a Calabrian peasant, he stopped at a small inn near Castellammare and ordered supper. He was hardly seated, when four ragamuffins of sinister aspect came in, and soon made it plain to the keen eyes and ears of the brigand that they knew who he was. He went on eating, however, and when he had finished his meal pulled his cloak round him and pretended to go to sleep. Then his companions talked less guardedly, and Pezza soon learnt that they were cut-throats who had made up their minds to murder him. After awhile he woke up and went off to bed, taking good care, however, to sleep with his weather-eye open, a precaution which was fully justified by the stealthy entrance at midnight of the four desperadoes, one of whom held a shaded light while the others

gathered softly round him dagger in hand. Another moment and the deed would have been done, had not the sleeper jumped up from the bed and, blowing the brains of the foremost out with his pistol, shouted, 'Villains! do you think Fra Diavolo can be killed like a sheep?' Frightened out of their wits, the others fled, tumbling over the terrified *padrone*, who, we may be sure, was glad at any price to get rid of his gruesome guest.

Another adventure was of a more comical kind. The robber chief, being in Salerno, went into a barber's shop, where he sat down and waited for the return of the proprietor, who chanced to be out. In a moment or two in walked a captain of gendarmes, who, thinking Fra Diavolo was the barber, ordered him to shave his chin, and be quick about it. The bandit, nothing loth, at once set to work, loosening his dagger with one hand, while with the other he wrapped the unsuspecting officer up in a napkin and proceeded to give him a good lathering. Then, just as he took the razor in hand, in came the barber in a state of wild excitement, and crying out breathlessly: 'Captain, captain! what do you think? They have caught him! Here—here in the city, they have found Fra Diavolo!' The captain, hugely delighted, was only able to splutter out through the midst of a mouthful of soapsuds which Fra Diavolo at that

moment adroitly thrust between his teeth, 'Per Bacco! then we have him at last!'

'Not yet,' quietly put in the robber, as he gave his foe an agonizing tweak of the nose; 'not too fast, my friend; at this moment you are in Fra Diavolo's hands!'

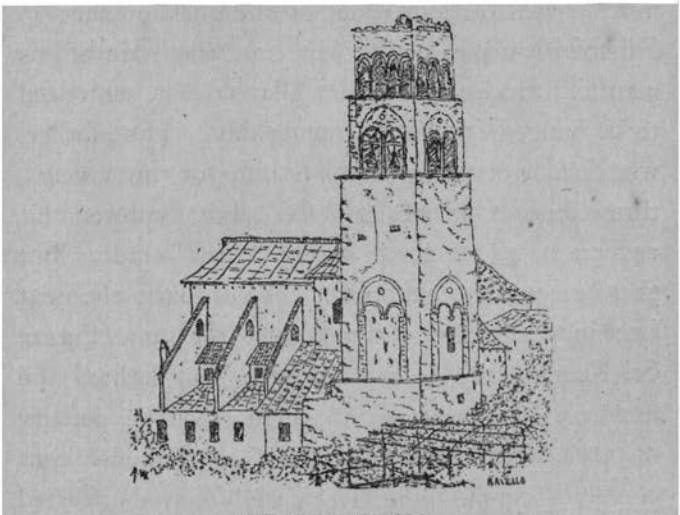
The luckless captain, at whose throat gleamed that uncomfortable-looking razor, looked at him with dismay, not daring to move a muscle; but Pezza had no intention of murdering him in cold blood. All he did was to strip him of his uniform, and to lash him fast to the chair with some shaving-towels round his limbs, and another stuffed into his mouth, after which he did the same to the barber. He then coolly arrayed himself in the official habiliments of his victim, mounted his horse, and cantered off down the street, '*beato della sua prodezza.*'

For some years after this narrow shave the government was too much taken up with its own difficulties to worry its head about the bandit, who practically had the whole of that part of the country at his mercy. But when the French came to Naples, General Partouneaux was ordered to capture him at all costs, and after a complete rout of his band by Colonel Hugo in October, 1806, the chief wandered about alone, hoping by luck to find an English ship in which he might get

away to Sicily. But in this he failed, and on going into the hamlet of Baronisi, near Eboli, to buy a pair of shoes, he was recognised, and carried first to Salerno and then to Naples. When brought to trial, during which he was allowed the aid of Signor Marini, a famous advocate of that time, he set up as a defence that he had acted throughout in the pay of Sir Sidney Smith, by whose orders it was that he had done his best to promote confusion and anarchy. Whatever credence his judges may have placed in the 'accento della verità e l'aria avvilita di questo sciagurato (rogue)'—and the report from which I draw these facts leads me to suppose that they by no means discredited him—it was obviously out of the question that so unpatriotic a plea could wipe out the stain of his manifold misdeeds, and Fra Diavolo was sentenced to be hanged on the following day. His mother, who had not set eyes upon him for thirty years, threw herself at Murat's feet and implored his clemency. The King received her kindly, but said he could not interfere. Accordingly the next afternoon her son was taken to the same Piazza del Mercato in which Masaniello had lighted the flame of insurrection, and there paid the penalty of his crimes in the presence of an immense concourse of people, who, ever cruelly curious, feasted

their eyes far into the night upon the poor carcase of him whose deeds, for so many years a terror to his fellows, have been again and again harmlessly revived in the domain of art by the 'fecunda immaginazione di poeti, di romanzieri, e di maestri di musica.'

Retracing my steps from Salerno over the mile and a half that leads into Vietri, and crossing the bridge there over the pretty ravine, I turn off to the right up some steps that lead to the village of Molina, and so skirting the base of Monte S. Liberatore, and winding through an exquisitely beautiful valley, I come to the ancient city of La Cava de' Tirreni.



CHURCH AT RAVELLO.

CHAPTER XI.

LA CAVA AND ABOUT.

'Men are we, and must grieve when e'en the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.'

La Cava de' Tirreni, Cava of the Etruscans, lies in the lovely Valle Metelliana, twenty-eight miles from Naples and five from Nocera de' Pagani,* and is a city of no mean mushroom growth. No town can be denied the style and title of a *città antichissima* that boasts of a foundation dating back 3,500 years, at which time the Tyrrhenians are said to have settled here and given to the place the name of Marcina. For the next one thousand years its annals are a blank; but in B.C. 650, or thereabouts, it was occupied by Greeks, in 422 by Samnites, and in 307 by

* Lucera was the first and Nocera the second Mohammedan colony on the mainland of Italy; hence the appellation 'dei Pagani.' Here died Helena, wife of Manfred, and Beatrice, wife of the Angevine Charles I.

Romans, who changed its name to Metellianum. In A.D. 466 the town was sacked by Genseric and his Vandals, and became known thenceforward as Cava, from the Cava Metelliana, or Grotta Arsicia, a cavern in the Monte Finestra that overhangs the present monastery. It was not until our own day, in 1862, that an official decree was promulgated, declaring the full and proper designation of the city to be, in commemoration of its venerable origin, La Cava de' Tirreni.

And La Cava has a second boast, in the possession of a church that owes its existence to nothing less than a direct interposition of the higher powers. I do but tell the tale as 'twas told to me, and accept it implicitly, having long ago renounced the profitless occupation of pricking bubbles. In all such cases one can only say with the reverent Tertullian, 'Credo quia impossibile.' Somewhere about the year one—a century or two can make no difference—as a couple of shepherd lads were watching their flocks under the stars, they were awed by a brilliant light shining in the midst of an elm-tree, and playing about a picture of the Virgin hanging from the boughs. The terrified pair set off, like those others to Bethlehem, and hastened to make known the wonder to the monks in the neighbouring monastery. In those days the

community was a small and not wealthy one, and it chanced that at that particular moment the monks themselves were, like the picture, very much 'up a tree' for want of cash. With the astuteness of their kind, they saw in the simple shepherds' tale an admirable opportunity for recruiting their coffers; and going forth with joy, they beheld, sure enough, the holy picture still pendent in the tree. Laying reverent hands upon it, they bore it with singing of psalms up the hill to the monastery, and deposited it safely in the highest place of honour amid their treasures, where it remained during the following day. But the next night while men slept it vanished mysteriously. High and low search was made for it, and for any traces of the thief who had committed so desperate an act of sacrilege. The picture had evanished as completely as the archiepiscopal ring at Rheims; and with stricken hearts and blighted hopes the monks resigned themselves to their loss. But they were speedily to be comforted. Breathless the shepherds came rushing back with the news that there was the light in the self-same tree illuminating the glories of the self-same picture. What is the use of asking 'How it was done'? I am concerned but with facts, and can only record that once more the worthy brethren sought to

control its vagaries by placing the picture a second time within their walls. But they might as well have sought to set a sunbeam in durance vile ; for the presentment by an unknown artist showed a persistent disinclination to stay indoors, and day after day, as surely as it was brought home, so surely did it find its way back at nightfall to its perch in the elm-tree. It became a serious question whether it would be polite to interfere with its future movements ; and after solemn council held, the monks came very properly to the conclusion that they had better leave it alone, and build a shrine in its honour, and make it comfortable, and admit the public at so much per head, to the edification of the faithful and the substantial augmentation of their own revenues. So they erected in due course a lordly but barn-like church, which to this day may be seen at the east end of the town of La Cava, bearing its dedication boldly upon its front, '*Ad virginis de ulmo effigiem colendam*,' perhaps the only church in the world dedicated to a prehistoric daub. It is gratifying to know that the anticipations of the good fathers were realized to the full ; the town soon grew apace from the presence of multitudes who thronged from all parts, and the monastic treasury suffered no diminution.

The other attractions of the city thus early immortalized are not numerous. La Cava has one long, very long, and rather picturesque street, with arcaded houses after the manner of Berne and Bologna. It boasts also, in official language which may not be gainsaid, 'un beau théatre et une villa municipale' (public garden), the former, outwardly at any rate, an improvement upon the building I remember there years ago, that was for all the world like a spacious loft fitted up with straw-seated chairs with precarious backs, and a few benches, like many of their occupants, with no visible means of support. I have never seen a performance on the Cava stage, and should have doubted whether there had ever been one but for the indubitable evidence of a much-tattered play-bill fluttering on the wall, on which a few lines were still legible stating that the price of a *sedia chiusa* in the orchestra-stalls was eight sous, and that a seat in the backless *platea*, or pit, could be secured for four, and standing room in the gallery for two. There is no lack of churches containing nothing in particular, except the high altar in that dedicated to the 'anime del purgatorio,' some way down the street on the right. The cathedral, in a piazza by the public garden, is plain and spacious, and when I saw it last was thronged by a great

multitude of sightseers at the ceremony of feet-washing on Maundy Thursday. Beyond these things I know of nothing to detain one in the town ; but there is a great deal on all sides to take one out of it, for it lies in the heart of a very beautiful valley, surrounded by the Sant' Angelo range, with Monte Finestra, La Croce, the peaked Liberatore, and the Aria del Grano, the highest peak in this Surrentine peninsula.

La Cava, monastery and all, can easily be visited from Naples in a day. Lunch may be taken at the quaint Albergo Scapolatiella, just outside the monastery ; but as La Trinità is shown to strangers in the forenoon only, it is better to go the evening before, and sleep either at Scapolatiella's or at the Pension Suisse in Cava, kept by Mdme. Gottraux, most motherly of hostesses. For those who like them, there are other and finer hotels in the town, at one of which I had a curious experience when I was prowling about among April showers in search of lunch. It was close upon noon as I went up a pretty rose-draped avenue to where the house stood curtained off from the world behind a glory of wistaria ; and greeted only by a jaded dog, that skulked off round a corner in order, as I mistakenly imagined, to arouse the inmates, I stepped over the threshold to be greeted,

as I fondly hoped, by a smiling *padrone* and an obsequious staff of slaves. Not a bit of it. A funereal silence held the place, which was apparently deserted by all things living. Here was the secretary's office, and there the porter's den, but neither porter nor secretary was to be seen or heard. I went upstairs amid a silence broken only by my own heart-beats, and passed nomadically through smoke-room and reading-room, and dived into bedrooms and explored corridors, in the hope, which grew fainter every moment, of bringing some live vestige of creation on to the scene. Signs of recent occupation lay all around me. A clothes-brush, certainly not of Tyrrhenian date, lay on a table as if it had just been thrown down; here a book lay open, there a newspaper of yesterday; but of moving animate life I saw no trace. After awhile a strange guilty feeling crept over me, and I began to feel ill at ease. There was something felonious in thus stealing at noonday about anotner fellow's house, who might at any moment meet me and accuse me of reading his love-letters, or pilfering his notepaper, or using his toothpicks. So I again sought the lower regions, caring naught if I could but light upon the room where at that hour of the day I might reasonably hope that some signs of breakfast would be *en évidence*. But I

never found it, and at length I did the only thing possible: I went out, as I had come in, amazed and greatly wondering. As to the direction in which the dining-room lay, and whose that dog was that now barked no more, having probably died of a broken heart, I never knew, and I know not now. Possibly some future explorer may be able to learn the truth. It was a small adventure, perhaps the smallest that has ever been chronicled; but it struck me at the time as very funny, because it does not take much to amuse a lotos-eater, and because the hotel in question is to Cava what the Métropole or the Grand is to the city of Westminster.

Half an hour's walk up through a bit of veritable Italian Switzerland—'a Swiss valley with the air and surroundings of South Italy'—brought me to the little village of S. Arcangelo and the chapel of La Pietra Santa, before which lies outstretched an enchanting panorama over hill and dale, from the edge of Vesuvius to the temple of Neptune at Pæstum. Along the opposite slopes above the Cappuccini convent are scattered many little thin white towers, looking like sentry-boxes, used for the *caccia de' colombi*, or pigeon hunt—a sport to which the folk in these parts are greatly addicted, and the annual inauguration of which,

on October 5 (the Cavese 'twelfth'), is the occasion of much merry-making in the kiosk, or *pagliajo*, of the Arco club. The 'hunt' consists of throwing small white pebbles from the towers into the midst of the flocks of wild birds as they make for the woods, and then flinging nets over them as they alight in search of the fancied food, which is just about an Italian's idea of sport. But the nett result is good, for I must confess that the Cava pigeons, when stewed, are about the best in the world.

There are, however, tales of fiercer warfare to absorb me, as I stand on a spot that in historic associations is second to none in all the old kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Inside the little church of the 'Holy Rock' the eye is drawn to a railing in the midst before the high altar, surrounding a fragment of bare living rock that rises through the floor to the height of about two feet. On that stone in the year 1092 the impetuous Urban II. set foot when he alighted from his mule on his way to the monastery, saying to the concourse of cardinals and prelates round him that the rest of the way which lay between them and the basilica (which he had come hither to consecrate) was *santa terra*, and that none must traverse it save with bare feet. This he said 'calling to mind

the names of so many venerable men' who had lived the lives of saints in the neighbouring grotto. In 1616 the church was adorned with three altars, over the chief one of which hangs a picture of the blessed Urban, with San Pietro, one of the abbats.

Here, too, eight centuries ago, when that stone still lay uncovered to the sky, Boemond preached the first crusade for the redemption of Jerusalem from the infidels; Boemond, elder son of Aberarda, and that Norman, Robert Guiscard, who ten years before had wrested Hildebrand from the hands of his foes, and left the Forum and the Coliseum a heap of ruins. That was a stirring time, for all Europe from Po to Picardy was in commotion. The nations of the West were going forth as one people in countless swarms beneath the banner of the cross, to burn Jews alive in their synagogues, and to stain with blood those holy places to which they came to kneel in adoration. It chanced that Boemond, fresh from the fields of Durazzo and Larissa, was quartered up here with a band of rough soldiery to overawe the turbulent men of Amalfi, and his soul caught fire at the tidings which reached his ear. At Clermont, in the presence of a round dozen of archbishops and twelvescore lesser prelates—'viri' (says Baldric, who was there) 'potentes et honorati innumeri'—

Urban had been proclaiming plenary indulgence, absolution from all sin, and a full receipt for all that might be due of canonical penance—'novum salutis genus,' as Guibert slightingly calls it—to all who should take up the mission of the *crocesignati*. It needed but a word from their captain to set this hillside in the Corpo di Cava ringing with the echo of the Clermont shout of 'Deus vult!' and in that moment of wild excitement, as Boemond plucked his red mantle from his shoulders, tore it to cross-shaped shreds, and gave to each warrior the emblem of lowly suffering and high endeavour, the feuds and follies of earth were forgotten, and all mundane attractions sank into nothingness. The thought that swayed that little company of fanatics here at Pietra Santa was the same thought that had kindled the fiery soul of Hildebrand, who had lain in his grave at Salerno for ten years when Urban, with the help of Conrad, drove his rival Guibert from Rome, and sought vainly to rouse a holy war at Piacenza. He failed, as Victor had failed before him, because he lacked the skill to strike the right chord in the ears of an apathetic Italy. It was not enough that such an enterprise should be launched with the sanction of ecclesiastics; it needed also to be floated out into deep water on the floodtide of popular sympathy;

and that tide did not begin its flowing until a certain memorable day some eight months later, when, outside the church of Notre Dame du Port at Clermont, in Auvergne, Urban lashed his hearers to frenzy by an impassioned harangue. He threw no veil over the perils that lay in the path. But what were hardships, wounds, or death, save things to be eagerly embraced for the salvation of the soul? 'Go, then!' he cried—'go on your errand of love, which will put out of sight all the ties that bind you to the spots which you call your homes. Your homes they are not. For the Christian all the world is a place of exile, at the same time that all the world is his country. They who die will enter the mansions of the blessed; the living shall pay for their errors before the sepulchre of their Lord. Blessed are they,' he went on, 'who, taking this vow upon them, shall obtain such a recompense! Happy they who are led to such a conflict, that they may share in such rewards!'

As there rose a great roar of response, and shouts of 'DIEX EL VOLT!' in their Limousin tongue rang through the air, he flung them back their own word. 'Yea! it is the will of God, and let those words be your war-cry face to face with His enemies and yours! Are ye not the soldiers

of the cross? Then wear on your hearts the blood-red symbol of Him Who died to save your souls!'

Peter the Hermit, emaciated by the austerities of self-discipline, had come back from Syria with a heart fired by the cruelties he had witnessed, and had set the lands beyond the Alps all aflame with his strong words. Going out from the presence of Urban with the pontifical benediction resting on him, bareheaded and unsandalled, riding upon an ass with the cross uplifted in his hand, the diminutive and ungainly eremite had been rousing the Teutonic peoples and awakening everywhere the fire of that uncontrollable wrath which was consuming his own soul. Three hundred thousand men flocked out after him, for the enterprise to which he called them was not wholly one of unselfish endeavour, seeing that the waters of Jordan could wash away every crime, and to wear the red cross was to ensure the everlasting remission of sin. We know how the hosts of Latin Christendom gathered to break off the yoke of Islam, headed by noble knights of fame Just at that moment the most puissant sovereigns of Europe seem to have had their hands full of other matters. The Emperor Henry IV. hung back; Philip of France—'le chef de tous les rois

Chrétiens'—was pleasure-hunting; William Rufus was sick of the sword; Spain was frying a kettle of fish with the Moors; Scot and Dane and cold-blooded Swede did not catch the infection. But the sturdiest captains of the age went eastward: Godfrey of Bouillon, the accomplished scion of Charlemagne's house; and easy-going Robert of Normandy, fated to breathe his last in a Cardiff dungeon; and Robert of Flanders, the 'sword and lance of the Christians'; and silver-tongued Count Stephen of Chartres, the richest prince in Europe; and old Raymond of Toulouse, with 160,000 men at his back; and Tancred, the 'very perfect gentle knight'; and Boemond, his cousin, Prince of Taranto, who lies buried by the brawling Aufidus. Strange and wild men were those Red Cross knights, with an odd jumbling of intensely selfish aims and blunted moral sense, with illimitable enterprise and courage inextinguishable, and hearts aglow with all a prophet's reverence for that world from which they drew the inspiration of their noble mission. We must no more measure them by their multitudinous lawless deeds than we must appraise a symphony of Brahms' by the number of semiquavers in it. Strange men they were, but not more strange, surely, than the paradox ever in our midst, of persons respectable and

respected who, with a strong religious sense that makes them lend an ear to every kind of preaching and prophesying about a millennium to come, yet never set their hands through all the livelong years to one action of purely personal and practical benevolence. With one hand they sow a rigid creed ; with the other they crumple up a brittle code.

Eight hundred years have sped since then, and all is quiet enough now among these peaceful Campanian hills, that are as full of mysterious presences as is a shadowy glade from the brush of Corot. Beneath all the lovely handiwork of Nature that lies around me I can hear the breathings of a silent eloquence that tells of vigil and fast and beatific vision, even as beneath the symbol of every butterfly that flits across my path under the blossoming trees I can discern the cryptic expression of a glowing old-world myth. Three centuries after the crests of those wild waves had broken and spent their strength for naught under the walls of Nicea and Ascalon and Antioch and Jerusalem, and the hordes of Jenghiz Kaan had shattered the chivalry of the West, when S. Louis was a captive, and the bones of a million Christian men and women lay whitening on the uplands of Phrygia and the sandy wastes of Lesser

Asia—there, but a mile or two away, within the grim walls of Nocera, birthplace of Hugo, founder of the Knights Templar, the soul of another Urban fretted itself against the bars of fate, as he lay helpless in the hands of his old ally, Duke Charles. The tale comes back to us like a romance rather than history. Few men, and still fewer Popes, ever gave brighter promise in their youth, or more dismally frustrated that promise, than did the learned and vigorous Archbishop of Bari, the Neapolitan Bartolommeo Prignano, known as Pope Urban VI. His was the hand that kindled the fire of the fiercest schism that ever desolated the Western Church, while for nearly half a century the air of the rival camps was rent by the thunderclaps of anathemas and the lightning-flashes of greater excommunications, which seem to have played with singular innocuousness round the heads of all concerned. That Urban at the outset had right on his side, that his intentions were excellent, his motives of the purest, does but make by contrast his end the more pitiful. In truth, it is hard not to pity him, even as we pity that other before him whose memory clings to us here—that poor old hermit, Pietro Morrone, who, on an evil day for himself and the Church, opened the door of his rocky cell up on Monte Morrone, in the remote

Abruzzi, to the clamour of an embassy from the Conclave at Perugia, who bade him in the name of Heaven put on the crown which none had worn for two years and a half. In vain did the lonely anchorite plead that he might be left to live and die in peace. Holy Church had need of him and he must go. So he went, with great weeping of the country folk amongst whom he had dwelt for more than fifty years almost as a divinity; and during a reign in Naples of no more than five months, as Cœlestine V., he succeeded in bringing the affairs of the Holy See into such depths of dire confusion that those who had pressed the pontificate on him most loudly were now the most eager to dismiss him. Gladly enough did he leave his high estate, knowing that it needed another hand than his to guide the ship among the rocks and quicksands of that troublous time, and being put under lock and key by Boniface VIII. in the castle of Fumone, not far from the birthplace of Cicero, he was after a few months found dead in his bed, with a nail driven through his temples.*

The prisoner of Nocera, however, was quite a

* He left behind him a tradition of pious self-devotion which found expression in the institution of a religious order of Cœlestinians, afterwards blended with the Fraticelli or Spiritual Franciscans. His story is told in Milman's 'Latin Christianity,' bk. xi., cap. 6.

different personage. Urban set his mind at once to the cleansing of the Augæan stables, the reformation of the Sacred College—an undertaking which, from all accounts, was not less hopeless than impolitic. The new pontiff had assumed with such indecent eagerness the insignia of his elevation, that from the very hour of his coronation whispers began to pass about among the outwitted cardinals that the suave-lipped prelate would likely enough prove to be more than they had bargained for. Nor were they far wrong. Urban had been chosen Pope simply because the Sacred College dared not make choice of a foreigner. 'Death or an Italian!' rang in their ears from thirty thousand seditious rebels. They were not left long in doubt as to what manner of man they had exalted. Urban would walk in his garden and read his breviary while he listened to the groans of his cardinals on the rack. Crowned in April, 1378, before July was over thirteen members of the College threw off their masks, and declared that they had but given him their votes through fear of violence, and that his election was null and void—an unconscionable lapse from truth neither wise nor seemly, which they followed up by the election of Robert de Genève, Bishop of Cambrai, called by the Italian party Clement VII. So the

shameless schism began, and with it progressed by little and little the moral decadence of Urban, who sank from mere folly to downright crime. Gentle and self-restrained in his youth, he now grew violent, rushed headlong into iniquity, and made himself a laughing-stock to gods and men. Falling out with Joanna I., who had espoused the cause of his rival at Avignon, and joining himself to the Angevine Charles, Duke of Durazzo and heir to the throne of Hungary, Urban suppressed the fair rebel, who was soon afterwards found suffocated in the Castello di Muro under a heap of pillows, or, as others say, strangled with a silken cord.

So the wretched story goes on. Not content with having brought the whole College like a nest of hornets about his ears, Urban next came to blows with his comrade Charles, and, as a result, speedily found himself hard beset up there in Nocera, from the windows of which he used three times a day, with bell, book, and candle, to load the sweet air with curses and anathemas upon his besiegers. One fine morning, however, he escaped in the disguise of a *contadino*, and no sooner did he find himself in Genoa than he began to make up for lost time, paying off old scores, and lowering himself deeper and deeper into an abyss of lawless-

ness. He had excommunicated till he was tired, and the only result was, as in the case of another famous prelate, that nobody seemed a bit the worse. It was now time for sterner measures. The cardinals were carrying on an open flirtation with Avignon, and must be brought to their senses; which Urban proceeded to do by thrusting out their eyes, tearing their finger and toe nails off with pincers, and breaking their teeth out with wooden mallets, crowning his playful vengeance by sewing five of them in sacks and flinging them neck and crop into the Mediterranean. Then, before the year was out, he fell from his mule and broke his neck.

Turn we from such gruesome reminiscences to one of a lighter sort. Many generations ago the worthy monks in this valley stood in need of some boon or other at the hands of the supreme pontiff, and, after due deliberation, despatched two of their number to Rome with a present of the famous Cava black figs to propitiate his Holiness and ensure the success of their suit. They were duly received by the Pope, who deigned to accept the propitiatory offering, and as he munched away at the figs he grew blander and more bland, and at last asked them where so excellent and luscious a fruit grew. The monks hastened to inform him that they grew

at La Cava, where, indeed, they flourished in so great abundance that the people commonly fed their swine with them. It certainly was one of the things one would rather have left unsaid, and the Holy Father does not appear to have taken the indiscreet remark as altogether a complimentary one. On the contrary, he so took it to heart that he arose in a tempest of wrath, and, demanding of his awe-stricken suppliants whether they had nothing better than pigs' food to present to the successor of S. Peter, he drove them from his presence, and ordered them, with their feet made fast in the stocks, to be pelted with the remains of their own fruit. And all this luckless pair could do, as they sat meditating upon their imprudence, was to congratulate one another that they had brought figs, and not water-melons!

AN URBAN TALE.

(*With apologies to the Muse of History.*)

Two worthy monks of Cava, seeking boon,
Waited in Peter's halls one afternoon,
Craving an audience of his Holiness,
Who just then snored in meek unconsciousness.
Siesta done, they lowly reverence made,
And baskets twain of Cava figs down laid,
Black, ripe and luscious, at the holy chair
Of stalwart Urban, who with scornful air

Glanced at their waystained garb, inquired their suit,
And tasted (quite by chance) a juicy fruit ;
Just one, and then another, the meanwhile
His hard stern lips relaxed in pleasant smile ;
While they stood dumb and smirking, charmed to know
Their humble offering soothed his palate so.
'Twas plain he liked them, for upon the floor
Ere long lay skins in heaps, at least a score :
Stole glances swift betwixt the suppliant twain,
Knowing full well their gift was not in vain ;
And one, the younger, so I grieve to think,
Shameless his 'alter ego' dared to wink.
At length the Pope, as if his thirst were o'er,
Paused, but looked much as if he'd like some more :
Then, 'Thank you, whence come they ? not Tiber's banks
Grow figs like these.' They eager both, 'No thanks,
Most Holy Father, for by Cava's shrine
We have such store we give them to the swine.'
Up rose the Pontiff, 'Is it with rotten fruit
Ye think to bluff me and to gain your suit ?
By Peter's toe ! 'tis pigs' food, do ye say,
At Holy Father's feet you dare to lay ?
I'll see you farther first. Up, guards, and at 'em !
Off with their heads ! but stay a moment, drat 'em !
I'll teach this Cava brood, in sight of Rome,
It had been better far to stop at home.'

That eve mid pelting crowds, bereft of frocks,
Sat two sad fig-stained figures in the stocks ;
Who found their only comfort in the thought
That they had *figs* not *water-melons* brought !

I have myself as great a horror of tall mountain-tops as the immortal Tartarin of Tarascon, but for those who like them there are several round this

Corpo di Cava which ought to repay an ascent, notably the fine Monte Finestra (4,110 feet), from which there is, as I am credibly informed, a view surpassing that from Vesuvius. I can well believe it, for a more lovely tract of country than this Surrentine peninsula, washed by the most beautiful of seas, it would be hard to find. The Corpo di Cava in the foreground of the picture is alone worth a pilgrimage, stretching away to the feet of the Apennines and the hills round Avello, dotted from base to sky-line with crumbling castles and gleaming villages, which look from afar like heaps of white cards. Westward lies Castellammare, hidden under the lofty sheltering peaks of Sant' Angelo—Castellammare, the ancient Stabiæ, wrecked by Sulla in the Social War, and by a mightier power than his when it shared the fate of Pompeii a hundred and seventy years afterwards. Nearer at hand is Gragnano, one huge macaroni factory, through the streets of which you pick your way among a multitude of frames on which are drying the long pale tubes of wheat and semolina flour. I wonder how many average English folk have any idea as to how macaroni is made? The problem may be solved by a trip to Gragnano, where the process can be seen in all its stages, which are few and simple enough. The farina

mixed with water is kneaded by a lever, worked by a couple of men in no particular amount of raiment, who do nothing but jump up and down from I can't say when in the morning till I am sure I don't know how late at night, for to the eyes of an ordinary mortal they appear to be always at it. After a few hours of this treatment the sticky stuff is thrown into a perforated copper cylinder, each hole of which is armed with a central pin at the bottom and a valve at the top. By means of a simple screw apparatus the valve is forcibly jammed down upon the farinaceous mixture, which, having no other means of escape, worms its way through the holes of the cylinder, and comes out in the form of the little gas-pipes we all know so well, which are then cut into lengths and dried. In addition to its trade in macaroni, Gragnano has a good deal to say in the matter of its wine, which is the strongest and nuttiest of all Campanian growths.

Still nearer at hand nestles the village of Pimonte just outside the demesne of the Casino Reale, anent which a story will bear retelling. Ninety years ago Pimonte lay under the rule of a *sindaco*, or mayor, of the name of Vicenzo Damavaro, who was universally respected and a most regular church-goer. Little did his nearest and dearest

suspect that such a model husband, father, and townsman was in the habit, whenever he could arrange it, of donning a highwayman's garb and levying blackmail on such luckless travellers as he caught among the hills after nightfall. All might have gone well with him if he had gone honestly about his dishonesty. But he had the audacity of forgetting that there is honour even among thieves, and added to the heinousness of his peccadilloes by impersonating, in the occasional absences of the real Simon Pure, a noted mountain bandit who at that time was the terror of the country-side, none other than that same Scarpi who was the guide and mentor of young Fra Diavolo. Unfortunately Scarpi got wind of the trick, and, moved to mighty wrath that his honour should be given to another, he took a chosen troop of trusty followers and at sunset surrounded the house of Damavaro the mayor, who happened, luckily for himself, to be at church confessing his sins, for it was Ash Wednesday evening. Not finding him at home, Scarpi 'left his card'; in other words, he burnt the house with all its contents to the ground and departed. Soon after this the real state of affairs came to the knowledge of the authorities in Naples, and the *sindaco* was arrested and sent to the galleys; possibly the only mayor who (at least, during his

year of office) has been convicted and condemned to penal servitude for highway robbery.

On the other side of the bay of Castellammare—in the blue water of which one can just see the islet of Rovigliano, where was hatched, as I have told, the gruesome plot by which King Andreas was slain*—lies shining Torre, of which the Neapolitans say in jest that '*Napoli fa i peccati e la Torre li paga*,' by which they would have us understand that Naples plays the deuce and Torre pays the piper—pays, that is, by its frequent visitations from Vesuvius for the sins of its wicked neighbour. Not a cheerful site for a city, at the foot of a mountain that has erupted sixty times since A.D. 1, and twice within the last two centuries has brought Torre to utmost grief. I was going to write 'hopeless grief,' but that cannot be, since it is at the present moment as light-hearted a place as you can find even in these parts, and makes a lot of money not only from selling lava for building-

* There has been much discussion as to the details of this murder, the guilt of which is thrown by Villani (not wholly an unprejudiced witness) upon the queen, and by others upon her kinsmen. Dominic of Gravina records that the king was strangled (cf. *supra*, p. 138) because he was supposed to wear a charm against poison and steel. The brave Joanna, after many years, died a like death, being strangled, 'con uno velo di seta,' says the contemporary Neri di Donato; to which Dietrich of Niem adds that it was 'de mandato ipsius Caroli.'

stone, but from the manufacture of gunpowder (not finding Vesuvius explosive enough!) and macaroni. Wonderful is the fruitfulness of all that volcanic soil. By a wonderful process of natural chemistry, the carbonic acid of the atmosphere, together with that arising from vegetable decay, operates slowly but surely in breaking the chemical bonds of union among the lava elements. The iron oxide becomes a hydrate or a carbonate, the alkalies are separated, and the rock is reduced to soil. Just as the hostile invasion of a country brings into her borders richer elements of population, so does a lava stream fertilize and make fat the land. It is a common sight to see three crops flourishing together, the vines on the mulberry-trees with corn underneath, syrup, silk, and cereal. Well might Messer Giovanni Boccaccio call it 'the fairest corner of Italy, full of cities and gardens, and springs of water and rich men.' Perhaps in his day there were not so many slums and smells, fewer ruffians and rookeries, among these 'fortunate Ausonians.'

Away at the back of the twin Torres there is a very famous shrine dedicated to the Virgin, the Madonna dell' Arco, which on Whit Monday is much resorted to by bands of the faithful, who, I regret to say, are rather given to return to Naples,

or wherever their homes may be during the small hours, in a condition which can only be characterized as bordering on the bestial. The *festa* is held in commemoration of a little incident that took place hereabouts in the year 1500. A man playing tennis missed his stroke, and in a fit of temper cut his ball at a fresco painting of the Madonna, from the forehead of which blood flowed. In his horror he stood rooted to the spot, and possibly would have been standing there still had not the Conte di Sarno come by and strung him up for his impiety on a tree, which same is thus recorded by the following lines in the church :

> ' *Longius intendens, tiliam quatit irritus ictu*
> *Lusor, et inde globo Virginis ora ferit :*
> *Illa cruore madet, saxi riget impius instar,*
> *Et ludi metam comperit esse crucem.*'

On a second tablet commemoration is made of yet another casualty of which this shrine was the scene. A hundred years after this short-tempered tennis-player received short shrift at the hands of the Count, a *contadina* was passing the spot with a little pig in tow which she was taking to market at Sant' Anastasia. Piggy was refractory and had to be chastised, in revenge for which the ill-mannered porker had the indelicacy to run between the legs of his mistress and to lay her sprawling

and cursing on the ground. Her husband, coming up at that moment, was scandalized by her bad language, and predicted that as she had lost her temper so should she lose her feet. For a year all went well, but on the first anniversary of her mishap, when she sat up in bed to look for her slippers, she found to her annoyance that she had no further need of them, for her feet had given her the slip during the night, and were lying in a forlorn and disconnected way on the floor. She said nothing, recognising Nemesis at a glance, and not waiting for her husband's 'I told you so,' she rose softly and walked, presumably upon her stumps, to the church, where she deposited her *disjecta membra*, which may be seen there to this day with the following epitaph :

'*Dum cadit insectans fugientem femina porcum,*
Virginis ædiculam dente scelesta petit :
Post annum, miseræque fuit vir verus aruspex,
Quos male direxit perdidit ægra pedes.'

There can be no doubt that it is a true pig-tale, because there are the verses and there are the feet, six in one line and four odd in another. And the moral is obvious :

'With flying feet the wilful porker turns
And lays both Anna's pride and person low :
Her soul upset with rage indignant burns,
And direful curses from her lips o'erflow.

At year's end lo! her husband's 'Told you so!'
Her feet are flown, there lie her useless shoes.
Tried traveller! strive an equal mind to show,
Lest you, like her, both feet and temper lose.'

It was in that same church that I once saw an elaborate *presepe*, or Christmas manger, one of which may be found in every church, and not a few of the houses, in Italy during the season of the Festa Gesù Bambino. The Virgin, 'our tainted nature's solitary boast,' sat robed in a magnificent blue-silk gown and red-satin panier, with her Child in a nineteenth-century cradle. Behind, against a strictly local background, stood a waxen and apologetic-looking Joseph, ox and ass on guard at his side, while overhead a fat-cheeked choir of angels in blue, pink and mauve satin knicker-bockers sang, or seemed to sing, their loudest. In the foreground was a bagpipes man, with peasants bringing gifts of eggs, macaroni, cheese and other indigenous delicacies. The only live thing was a greasy old sacristan, who restlessly rattled a tin money box and exacted dues for the support of the show, which at the end of the *festa* would be huddled away into a lumber closet till wanted again next year.

Farther north, to the right of Vesuvius from where I am standing, 1,200 feet above sea-level,

rises the monastery of Monte Vergine, which gives its name to a celebrated shrine of the 'Madre di Dio' that stands on the site of an ancient temple of Cybele, not wholly obliterated. Of equal interest, perhaps, with a wonder-working picture of the Madonna are a reliquary containing the bones of San Costanzo, and the last resting-place of Catharine of Valois, who lies close to her son Louis of Taranto, one of the four husbands of Joanna I. The place is rich also in memories of poor gentle Manfred, who went forth to his last fight from the fine old castle of Atripalda yonder, and who built a tomb here for himself, little dreaming of that day of fatal treachery when on the plains of Apulia, with the shout of 'Hurrah for Suabia!' on his lips, he should fall pierced by a French lance in the midst of his trusty Musulmans. 'For three days'—so runs the chronicle of the Florentine Malespini—'they searched among the slain for the body of Manfred, which could not be found, and it was not known whether he was killed, or taken, or had escaped; and then he was found in the midst of the field, and recognised by several marks or signs about his person, by a valet of his army; and this menial put his royal master's body across the back of an ass, and came into the French camp crying, "Who will buy Manfred?" for which he

was beaten with a stick by one of the barons of King Charles; and the body was carried before King Charles. Then the Count Giordano beat his face with both his hands, weeping and exclaiming, "*Oimè, Signor mio!*" for which he was much commended by the French and by some of the barons.' Charles was entreated to allow the body to be buried, but Manfred had been lying under the pains and penalties of the Church, and so at the foot of Benevento Bridge they cast his body into a hole, and every soldier flung a stone at it.*

Jam satis superque. It is time to ring down the curtain upon the polydædal scenes that rise before me in bewildering confusion in this fair storm-tossed tract of Magna Græcia, in which every village and hamlet has some tale of wonder or morsel of history; each peak and pass and hillside its own little bit of legendary lore or romantic story, dating back as often as not to ages long numbered with the past. I must make an end of rambling memories, and turn my steps to a more sober reality of these latter days—the world-famous Badia Cavense, or monastery of the Most Holy Trinity.

* See Dante, Purg. iii. 103 *seqq.*, and the pathetic lines on the same subject in the Inferno, xxviii.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MONASTERY OF LA CAVA.

'*Viator! utriusque diminutionem ne mireris: sublunarium omnium lex est, non pœna perire, tu ex ungue metire leonem: abi sospes.*'—Inscription on the Monastery Rock.

THE venerable walled village of Corpo di Cava, ten minutes beyond La Pietra Santa, was founded in 1081 by the pious hands of Pietro, the third abbat of the monastery, and through many generations was the seat of a bishopric and the scene of much turbulent conflict. Now it is the very home of tranquillity—*secretum iter et fallentis semita vitæ*—a luxurious bower of rest for the lotos-eater, who can look at life from a distance, and dream his dreams here in the midst of such natural beauty as it would be hard to excel.

The grand and solitary situation of the Badia,* or monastery, is described in the 'Gerusalemme Conquistata' by Tasso, the poor 'infanto perduto,' to whom life was but a long avenue of darkened days.

* See 'List of Illustrations.'

As a lad he was brought hither by his father in 1554, and was here inspired within a bow-shot of the Pietra Santa to immortalize in that great poem the victories of the cross in Holy Land. That the poet loved well these walls in which he spent many years of his early life we know from his letters, in one of which, written to Angelo Grillo in Genoa, he tells his friend that his muse has made special mention 'di Papa Urbano II. e del monasterio della Cava.'* In the third canto of the poem we find the passage thus, the future pontiff being then supposed to be but a simple monk in the community :

'Si scorge il umil Cava un vecchio onesto
Fuggir il mondo e sue fallaci cure.
E le nubi toccar quel monte e questo,
E cader l'ombre nelle valli oscure;
E il sacro albergo in solitari e cupi
Luoghi celarsi in fra pendenti rupi.'

The thought of which may be thus outlined :

'In lowly Cava, far from earth's false ways,
An honest aged man lives peaceful days;
Where lowering cloud and shifting shadow falls
O'er rocks that guard the holy silent walls.'

The monastery, which at the present time includes an excellent seminary for a hundred and

* Lett. di Torquato Tasso illustrate da Cesare Guasti, No. 1064.

twenty boys, was founded in 1011 by Alferio, or Adalferio, Pappacarbone, a Salernian noble and cousin of Prince Guaimar III., in whose councils he stood high, and by whom he was entrusted with many weighty affairs of state. Being sent on one occasion as ambassador to the Court of Otho III., he was stricken by sickness in the street, and was carried into a monastery, where he vowed that if he recovered he would put on the habit of a monk. He kept his word, and joined the Benedictines at Cluny under the famous abbat Odilon, throwing as much energy into his religious duties as he had before thrown into secular affairs, and winning the hearts of all men by his lowliness and charity. After awhile he was ordained priest, and was taken from his retreat to become spiritual adviser and 'keeper of the conscience' to his old master Guaimar. But the intrigues of a Court and life in noisy, restless Salerno pleased ill the holy man, and he came up the valley to this Grotta Arsicia in Monte Finestra, hoping here to find solitude and peace. But the fame of his sanctity and austere life could not be hid, and many sought him in his lonely cell to confess their sins and put themselves under his ghostly direction. Soon the grotto was found too small for them, and Alferio resolved to build a large monastery on the hill of

Sant' Elva, away up on the opposite slope of the valley of the murmuring Selano. The little band set to work with their own hands, but all to no purpose, for the stones they laid in order during the day were disturbed and thrown down each night by invisible agency ; upon which the saint desisted, perceiving that it was not the will of heaven that he should build there. But as he knelt that night before the cross beseeching celestial guidance, a brilliant light shining in three broad rays filled the grotto, and Alferio was given to understand, in some way which has not been recorded, that the Grotta Arsicia itself must be the starting-point of the new buildings. At once they were taken in hand, and soon rose to magnificent proportions, and in memory of the vision were dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity.

It was not likely that such a monastery and such an abbat would lack recruits, and a great multitude came, among whom were men of noble birth and vast possessions, one of the first being Dauferius, Prince of Benevento, who, under the name of Desiderius, became first abbat of Monte Cassino, and then Pope Victor III. After many years of labour Alferio died, while on his knees in prayer, at sunset of Maundy Thursday, in the year 1050, at the good old age of 120, 'full of merit and

sanctity,' and was laid to rest in the upper wall of his grotto, into which the north side of the monastery church is built. The monks are in possession of special information, to the effect that the departed abbat was received and escorted into paradise by his three renowned brethren of Cluny, Odo, Mayeul, and Odilon. Close to the superb marble-decked chapel of the Blessed Sacrament the rough living rock of the pious founder's cell stands, in startling contrast with its rich surroundings; and there, under a picture of S. Michael, are the tombs of Alferio and his successors, Leo and Pietro, erected to their everlasting memory in 1641. Above the grotto are the words:

'*Rustica olim rupes trino nunc lumine clara*
Cœlitus emisso pignora sacra tego.'

On the marble in the midst is his epitaph:

'Sanctus Alpherius Salernitanus patritius Cavensis cœnobii abbas I. Victorisque III. Pont. magister inclytus primus in hoc sacro pater est Alpherius antro sic reliquis vita celsior ut tumulo, hic tumulum incoluit vivens ubi lumine trino admonitus Triadi dedicat ecclesiam. Quid mirum exanimi vitam si reddidit orans qui validus semper vixerat in tumulo! Feria v in cœna Domini cœlestis cœnæ conviva conscius efficitur æt. suæ CXX. an. Christi ML.'

On the left hand is the grave of Leo of Lucca (1050-76), thus marked:

'Horrescis cum audis sub specu leonem? Propera ne paveas: est ferus feris: hinc terribile monstrum peremit,

cæterum lenis est leo. Hinc pauperes vinctos gravatos aluit, solvit, erexit, torpens ignis ater foris non ussit quem cœlestis flamma intus accendit. Quid miraris prope virginem Leonem? obstupesce magis hunc Virginis Deiparæ crebro dignatum aspectu: floruit anno Domini MLXXIX.

On the right is that of Pietro, founder's nephew:

'Hac tegitur petra Petrus abbas III. Alpherii nepos et hæres sanctitatis, facta majoris vidit et invidit. Ille cœnobium erexit, iste evexit; primus legibus suos oneravit, hic dignitatibus honoravit: ille primus honoribus præfuit, hic primus honoribus profuit: abbates namque mitra cumulavit primus, tria millia nepotum Alpherio pro uno reddidit: homines adhuc invitos ferrea catena ad cœlum trahebat. Miraris hoc? Præmiserat ad cœli januas Urbanum II. discipulum. Flor. ann. DNI. MCXXIII.

Pietro was the abbat who received Urban and a great host of princes of the Church on the occasion of the consecration of the basilica. He had the distinction of being the first of that rank to wear a bishop's mitre, and died full of years and honour, after a rule of forty years. All that was mortal of his successor, Costabile Gentilcore, reposes under the neighbouring altar in a marble urn bearing his effigy. Opposite the grotto is the treasury, with a finely-carved wooden door, from a design by Andrea of Salerno, and containing, among other relics, a silver bust, the gift of Urban II., with the skull of Santa Felicità and the remains of her children, in an exquisitely-wrought

ivory casket of the fourteenth century, adorned with beaten-silver work.

To those early abbats succeeded a long line of rulers, who governed the house with varying wisdom through some very unquiet times. Here are a few of their names: Simone, who dabbled to some purpose in over-sea trading; Falcone, an orator 'pulcro sermone refulgens'; Marino, a good all-round man, an excellent administrator and judicious reformer, founder of a religious house in Naples near the Vicaria (Castel Capuano), munificent protector of the fine arts, and donor of the superb mosaic ambo and many frescoes; Benincasa, who earned the epitaph 'Pastore eccellente, tanto pio quanto prudente,' and received in trust for the monastery many rich offerings from the greatest men of that age; Pietro II.; Balsamo, to whose care is owing the preservation of many ancient conventual records and registers; Leonardo — but, as said my guide, 'A che fare più nomi?' It would lead me too far afield to trace, even in barest outline, the records of this illustrious community among the tangled history of the time when it was in its glory. That period stretched from its foundation in 1011 to the middle of the fifteenth century, when upon the abbat was conferred the title of Magnus, together

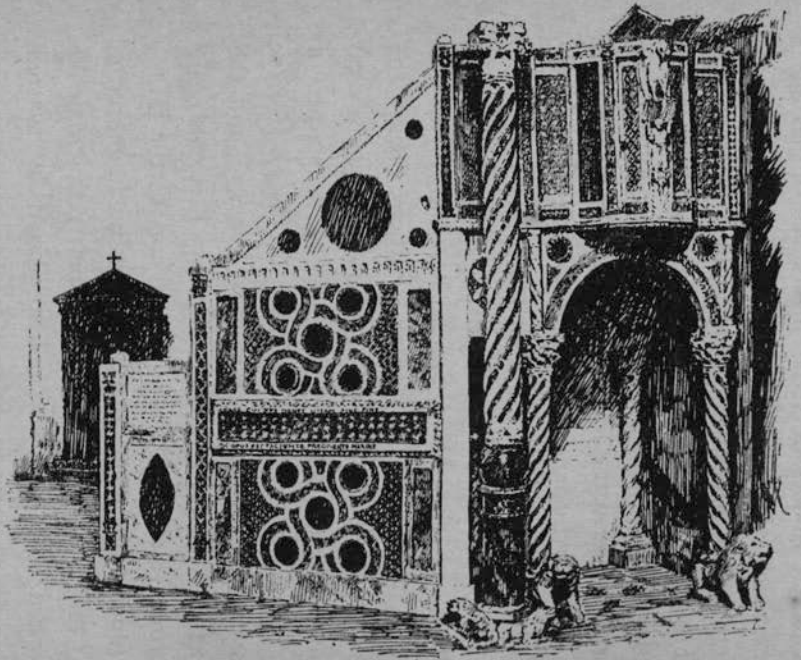
with the temporal dignity of Baron di Tramutola and the jurisdiction over seventy-seven other monasteries, ninety priories, and thirty 'granges,' or branch houses. From this period the monastery, as if growing out of touch with the intention of its unworldly founder, began to decline from its ancient lustre—at least, as a home of spiritual consolation—and set its hands to the winning of laurels in another field, as the protector of science, art, and letters. For reasons too long to tell here it fell under the displeasure of certain of the higher powers, who gave it the cold shoulder and something more; and the monks made up their minds that the wisest thing they could do was to busy themselves less with worldly affairs and devote themselves to the care and enrichment of their matchless library. This they did for many generations, with the result that at the present moment there is no such collection of monastic records in Europe, with the single exception of that at Monte Cassino, the home of S. Benedict.

The chief entrance of the basilica, which ranks as a cathedral, is through an atrium at the east end, on the right side of which stands the tomb, erected by the abbat Marino, of Queen Sibylla, sister of the duke of Burgundy, and second wife of Roger of Sicily, with an inscription setting forth

the munificence of her lord and her own great love for the monastery :

> *' Rex huic dat rupi Rogerius arva Siclôrum :*
> *Dat conjux cineres mæsta Sibylla suos.'*

On either side of the entrance stand also two marble urns from Pæstum, sculptured with representations of a bacchanalian dance and a boar-hunt in Caledon. A few steps lead hence up into the church itself, which is built in the form of a Latin cross, 160 feet long and 70 feet wide in the nave. The walls, pierced by twelve very large windows, are of stucco laid over *bardiglio*, and underneath is a pavement of white marble. Above the great door a large picture commemorates the presentation of the deed of gift by Roger to abbat Pietro in the presence of Urban. On the right is a door leading into the campanile, with an inscription recording the confirmation of ancient privileges by Clement XIII. in 1761. The adjoining altar is dedicated to S. Felicità, the special protectress and patroness of the Badia, in whose honour an annual *festa* is held on July 10. Her chapel contains a modern picture of her by Morani and frescoes by Niccoli, both members of the order. Next is a polygonal chapel of the Virgin, with two side statues of S. Benedict and S. Scholastica, and a painted Madonna and an Assumption by the Bene-



PULPIT IN MONASTERY OF LA CAVA.

To face p. 293.

dictine Guerra (1881). The third altar on this side (which should be the south, but is the north) is in honour of abbat Mauro, an early disciple of Benedict, who is depicted in the act of healing a sick man. The chapel of the Crociera contains a picture by Morani of that noble Tertullus, of whose gift of Capri and other possessions to the order I have already told. Other paintings set forth scenes in the life of Benedict, Bruno (founder of the Carthusians), Giovanni Gualberto (founder of the Vallombrosians), S. Geltrude, S. Hildegarde, S. Scholastica, and S. Francesca Romana. The Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, known also as the Chapel of the Holy Fathers, next the grotto, is in the 'stile barocco,' and contains several tombs full of saintly relics, as well as statues of Felicitas (*Christi amore saucia*), S. Joseph (*Custos Domini sui*), S. Matthew (*facies hominis*), and the Virgin Mother, '*gratia plena*'; here also are pictures of the ubiquitous Urban and Victor III.

One of the chief glories of this noble church is its magnificent ambo, or gospel pulpit, richly adorned with mosaics, and supported by twisted columns resting on lions. It was given in the twelfth century by the abbat Marino, as recorded in the inscription:

> '*Abbas cui Christus donet vitam sine fine,*
> *Hoc opus est factum te præcipiente Marine.*'

But for the watchful care of the monks, this unrivalled piece of work would at one time have been destroyed, and a tablet on the staircase thus records its preservation and restoration:

'Ut almi patris Benedicti xiv. sæcularis memoriæ monumentum sisteret, abbas dominus Michæl Morcaldi quod sæculo xii. beatus Marinus Capicius abbas excitavit, musivum [*sic*] hocce opus temporum injuria collapsum ad pristinam formam reintegrandum curavit atque recollectis partibus undique sparsis, fratri Carthusiano Joanno Jannelli a Nuceria restaurandum dedit.'

The presbytery is adorned with two cipolline columns and much rich marble-work, as well as with a picture of scenes from the Apocalypse (chapters iv. and v.). In a cupboard are preserved sixteen parchment choral books in folio, leather-bound with brass nails; the text under the *canto fermo*, in Gothic characters, emblazoned with fine illuminated miniatures by Boccardo of Florence and his son. The initial letters are of exquisite workmanship, representing leaves, fruit, flowers, gems, animals (some of which Mr. Sclater, of the Zoo, would give his ears to possess in the flesh), landscapes, scripture scenes, and saints. Here, also, is a fresco of the founder's vision of the Trinity, with pictures of four doctors—Anselm, Bernard, Bede, and Leander (friend of the saintly Gregory), and emblematical representations of the

monastic life, including study, prayer, meditation, and work. At the end of the choir stands one of the largest organs in Italy, which my courteous *condottore* assured me was 'di fama mondiale.' It was built in 1844 by Gennari, of Lanciano, near Ortona, in the Abruzzi. The instrument is of imposing, indeed colossal, proportions, and is said to possess some very perfect internal mechanical work. There are 4,134 pipes, 3 manuals, and 75 sounding stops—32 on the Great Organ, 18 on the Swell, and 16 on the Choir, as well as numerous 'pedalini di effetto.' It will be seen from these figures that as a giant it would make but a poor show beside such instruments as those at the Albert Hall and the Town Hall in Sydney; nor can I say much in favour of its tone. Unfortunately, as my visit was during the last days of Holy Week, I had no opportunity of trying it myself, and I could form no proper opinion of its capabilities from the very distressing exhibition which the organist treated us to at the mass on Easter Even. These Italian performers—they really are not players—never think of riding the whirlwind with a curb, and as a consequence my ears were devastated by a blustering cyclone of cacophony, lightened at intervals by a shrill twittering among the small pipes, which effectually

banished devotion, drowned what ought to have been the majestic march of the grand old church chants, and eventually drove me from the building in an agony: like Apollyon from Christian, I gat myself away discomfited. The one redeeming feature about the performer's efforts was that for the most part he, after the manner of his tribe, deftly let the pedal-work alone, with the exception of an occasional snort from a 16-foot reed, described to me—and I have no reason to doubt it—as a 'canna più grande del basso lunga metri 5·72 e di diametri 0·35.' Only for 5 I should read 15, and for 0 I should read 10. It seems that the good Cavesi are mightily proud of the orchestral effects of which their instrument is capable: nothing like it has been known since the days of Nebuchadnezzar. There is neither pipe nor string that it cannot imitate; 'Modulatione,' says an inscription upon it, 'instrumentorumque omnium imitatione'; it stands supreme as a 'miraculum artis unanimi consensu,' and in proper hands would no doubt justify the encomiums of its proud possessors.

The sacristy is entered through a walnut-wood door carved from a design by Rafaelle, with emblems of the Evangelists. Adjoining it is the Chapel of the Cross, with paintings of the Ascension, Moses, David, S. Peter, and S. Paul, sur-

rounded by emblems of the Passion and troops of saucy angels playing a toy symphony. The last chapel has, among other pictures, one of the baptism of Christ, copied from Andrea of Salerno, the pupil of Rafaelle, and one of the founders of the Neapolitan school in the seventeenth century. Here, too, is a wall-tablet with a cross, recording the consecration of the church in 1092 at the hands of Urban, who 'propriis manibus in sacræ rei signum oleo sancto linivit.'

The chapter-room is a handsome *sala* adorned with fine wood-carvings, some of which, after designs by Andrea, formed part of the former choir-stalls in the church. In the midst of the floor is inlaid the awe-inspiring admonition, 'Justus accusator est sui.' Round the walls are ranged counterfeit presentments of illustrious members of the order, and eighteen pontiffs, men for the most part of prescient enterprise and lofty aims, who, under the shadow of the Grotta Arsicia, were trained and armed for the dour fight in which afterwards they were called to bear a resolute part. Side by side with them are five men of royal race who put on the frock of the order, and four illustrious saints—Scholastica, Riccarda, Cunegonda, and the imperial Agnes.

But greater in my eyes than all these impossible

busts and graceless effigies, and the rather poor stuff in the picture-gallery, are the transcendent glories of the Archivio and library. It is not in such a place that one looks for much light literature; and, with certain exceptions, it is not probable that the literary contents of the Trinità would fetch much in solid cash if put up for sale in a London auction-mart. But in their own musty way many of the treasures are of inestimable value, and of a nature that makes one linger long over the presses and cases in which they lie enshrined. The family, municipal, and ecclesiastical registers are of unique interest, as illustrating the history and topography of the country from Po to Palermo. They have been largely drawn upon by Giannone, Muratori, and others, and are indeed indispensable to any historian of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Here in three hundred presses of cypress-wood are stowed away 13,560 Latin parchment deeds of donatives and contracts, ranging from A.D. 793 to 1834; 105 Greek ones, from A.D. 1005 to 1273; 757 diplomas, etc., from A.D. 840 to 1776; and a herd of Papal bulls amounting to some 1,600. Among 600 early printed books are many *incunaboli*, or first editions; notably, a volume stamped with a large 'No. 1,' and bearing the imprint of Magonza, A.D. 1467;

a 'History' of Eusebius (1470); a Gerson 'De Passionibus Animi' (1647); a folio Juvenal of 1478, and a Tibullus of 1488. At one moment I am endeavouring, with scant success, to worm the secrets out of a document drawn up under the hand and seal of a Beneventine prince in 840, when Gregory IV. was Pope in Rome, and Ethelwulf reigned in Anglia, and Charlemagne (one of whose letters is in the next drawer) had been lying in his grave at Aachen but a quarter of a century. Next minute I actually have my finger on the original deed of gift by which Alferio conveyed the site of the monastery, with his effigy on the seal; from which I pass to a deed granted by Baldwin IV., King of Jerusalem, and signed by his chancellor, William of Tyre, bestowing a free pass—'franchigia della tassa d'ancoraggio'—on all vessels belonging to the monastery trading to the Levant; from which I gather that in those spacious times the worthy anchorites were not above doing a bit of trading on their own account. After this is displayed before my bewildered gaze the 'Codex Legum Longobardorum' of 1004, adorned with miniatures showing the customs and costumes of the Lombards, and containing a complete digest of Lombard law, given to the monastery in 1263 by the archpriest of Otranto; next is a superbly-

illuminated copy of the New Testament; while between the law and the gospel reposes the vulgate text of S. Jerome, after Idacius Clarus, bishop of Thapsus, written on vellum in the fifth century in five different characters, three columns on a quarto page, with the words for the most part undivided, and the sacred books arranged in uncanonical order. In the wide margin are here and there written in extremely fine characters arguments enforcing the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, added no doubt with a special reference to the raging Arian controversy. The book was pointed out to me with pride as containing a canticle at the end of the psalter sung by the shepherd-king after his victory over the man of Gath, as well as the famous verse of the 'three witnesses,' which I believe is not found in any Greek MS. of an earlier date than the sixteenth century. Leo XII., under the inspiration of Cardinal Mai, ordered a transcript of this volume to be made and placed in the Vatican.

For him who is still unsatiated there is a Bede's 'De Temporibus' (ninth century), with rich marginal notes bearing on Italy, which have been printed by Muratori in the 'Scriptores Rerum'; a lovely office-book of the eleventh century, with exquisite notation of the chant; and a Vulgate in

Gothic character by one Guido, a monk, illuminated with such miniatures as must have taken the good workman's lifetime to accomplish. More secular curiosities are a *morgengabe*, or marriage gift, of 1015, when the Normans were sharpening their swords for that campaign which put an end forever to the rule of eastern emperors in Italy; an *atto di contradote* of 792, in which one Alderisius bestows all his worldly goods upon his bride, Contrude; Papal documents, like grasshoppers for multitude, of any and every pontiff between Gregory VII. in 1073 and Alexander VI. in 1503, that playful prelate, Roderigo Borgia, father of Lucrezia, who, having mixed a deadly draught for a couple of his cardinals in the house of De Corneto, drank it off himself by mistake. For though Nemesis may tarry like a telegraph-boy over his game of marbles, she usually arrives at last. Then there are diplomas, and decrees, and protocols enough to paper the monastery; one of them, dated 1139, signed in Greek, and sealed by the hand of that Roger of Sicily who tamed Amalfi, made Naples tremble, and drew a boundary-line in South Italy which for centuries was hardly shifted by so much as a hair's breadth. After all these I find myself poring over a rare and most original nautical chart, or *portolana*, of 1343—that year of

terrible earthquake in which good Robert the king died in Naples, and his grand-daughter, Joanna, a lass of sixteen, was called to the troubles of a crown. These and a thousand more links between a dead past and that shrill railway whistle which I can hear through the open window as I stand and ponder them, are they not written for all who list in the portly tomes of the 'Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis'?—a comprehensive and quite wonderful catalogue of every individual book, parchment, paper, pamphlet, and map that this richly-stored library contains. On a table near the door lies a book open to all comers, on the pages of which I am invited to add my name to a list that, as I turn backwards, I see contains not a few known to fame—Angelo Mai, Helena Grand-Duchess of Russia, Walter Scott, Maria Christina Queen of Naples, Ferdinand II., the unhappy Maximilian, Giuseppe Verdi, the late Tsarina, and the present beloved and accomplished Queen of Italy.

Near the library is a room filled with bassi-relievi and mosaics from the ancient town of Metella, a glance at which is enough to show their extreme antiquity. Among them is a relief of Bacchus, dating from before the Christian era and inscribed with the name of its owner, Anicius Auchenius. Of yet older date are four *ombre* with unintelligible

lettering dug up on the site of Marcina, where now the town of La Cava stands. These and many other objects here are well worth looking at, but I hasten on to the crypt, passing on the way a large cruciform chamber, from which there is a most picturesque view of the old thirteenth-century cloisters. The hoary rocky wall was once bright with paintings, of which time and damp have left only a figure which is supposed to be that of Benedict. Here stand two large marble vessels, used of old for the washing of bodies before sepulture, and two heathen sarcophagi with finely wrought sculptures of Drusus fighting the Germans, and a country scene. At the entrance of what they call the Cimitero Longobardo, or crypt, I read the words 'Requiescunt in terræ polvere expectantes beatam spem advenientis Dei,' and come upon a stone let into a pilaster that marks the last resting-place on earth of Theodoric, known as the antipope Sylvester III., and the adversary of Paschal II. He ruled but for a hundred and three days, and was then sent here to Cava to expiate his errors in 1099. He seems thoroughly to have forsaken his pernicious ways, and after putting on the habit of the order died in the odour of sanctity three years later. His epitaph runs: 'Theodoricus in pace MCII.'

The whole place is redolent of feud and schism. Half a dozen paces away is the dust of antipope Gregory VIII. under a marble slab, bearing a reversed mitre, who died here in 1122, a prisoner in the hands of the pitiless Callixtus II. ; side by side with him lies yet another disturber of the Church's peace, Innocent III., shut up here in 1180 by Alexander III. On the right of the descent into the crypt is the Grotta Arsicia, so that we are now immediately beneath the grave of the founder in the church above. And here an extraordinary sight meets the eye. On every side, piled up in stacks four and five feet high, are large quantities of human bones, many of which are those of Lombard and Norman princes, and men of renown, who craved burial in the soil of the cemetery, which, as in the Campo Santo at Pisa, had been brought hither from Palestine. Among the names preserved in the archives are those of Riccardo (1082), Count of Campagna ; Ludovico (1091), son of Duke Roger ; Guaimar (1111), nephew of the great Salernitan prince ; Sicelgaita (1118), daughter of Count Grimoaldo ; Giordano of Nocera, Sanseverino, and many others. These are the greater dead. But others there are, the bones of nameless brethren who from time to time, as the centuries have rolled along, have been borne

hither from the carven choir above, the cowl exchanged for the cerements of the grave, the last Miserere sung, the last penance performed. The bones at my feet, undistinguished in their multitude, are the bones of men who, if they could come together again, could tell me not a little of that 'Sturm und Drang' of life in which many a brave soul has gone under, and from which they, perchance, themselves in their shrinking sought among the solitudes of these hillsides a nearer and larger vision of the things that are eternal.

It is a relief to come once more above ground into the warm spring sunshine. As I pass along through the corridors there falls upon my ear the run of boyish feet and the laughter of a handful of scholars, who now learn their alphabet where princes of the Church once agonized, and play their boyish games above that great nameless army of silent dead who lie beneath their feet, 'unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.' My thoughts go wandering away over the blue stretch of western water, whose tinkling wavelets woo the feet of these vine-clad hills; and I stand again in memory in fair Estremadura, a thousand miles away, where the candelabra-laden chestnut woods are whispering to hoary walls memories of a monarch who, when he had buried half his heart in the grave of his

queen, was borne to Yuste by a great wave of world-weariness, and, exchanging a crown for a cloister, sought there a refuge and a grave. The exact impulse which moved Charles we do not know; it may have been akin to that of the uncrowned dead here at Cava, who perhaps had sucked the orange dry, had tasted both the bitter and the sweet; and as the shadows lengthened they turned their steps hither, and cast down here the outward and visible burden of life, and pondered the sting of the old-world truth, that life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel.



CHAPTER XIII.

LITTUS VENERIS.

'Littus beatæ Veneris aureum Baias.'—MARTIAL.

'Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility,
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruins grand
With an immaculate charm which cannot be effaced.'

AT six o'clock on a glowing June morning I found myself where Prose and Poetry meet, waiting for a steam tramcar under the shadow of the tomb of Virgil, near the end of that umbrageous Chiaja which alone makes giddy, glaring Naples endurable to a stranger during the warm months of summer. It is worth staying at the Grand Hotel just to go round the corner between six and eight a.m., and watch the life and colour and movement in the Strada di Piedigrotta, which stretches from the Piazza Umberto to the Posilipo tunnel. Crowds of laughing and chattering country-folk are streaming in along the broad white thoroughfare. Idyl

and eclogue, with here and there a dash of comedy, amuse and delight the eye that has grown weary of the prose of life. Here are *al fresco* toilets being performed by dozens, in the midst of troops of long-haired matriarchal goats and sleek sleepy-looking cows, mixed up with a motley rabble of women and half-naked youngsters who, with jug or glass in hand, are awaiting their turn at the lacteal stream—

'*Rusticus expectat dum lactis defluat amnis.*'

Shrill-voiced matrons on fourth-floor balconies are screaming their orders to the greengrocer below, as they let down their baskets for the day's supply of garlic and greens. A thousand strident cries mingle with the jangling bells of a shrieking cart full of tuff-stone, whose driver sprawls a-top of his cargo devouring a loaf into the middle of which he has dribbled a dose of rough red wine; and as he lets his mule-team pick their wilful way through the throng, they come within an inch of running down a mouldy old brown-frocked mendicant friar, who is 'button-holing' buyer and seller alike for a bean or a potato, which he consigns, with a smirk and a whisk of his scarf by way of thanks, to a basket already pressed down and running over—a flourishing trade, from the look of things.

Has there ever, I wonder, risen a sun that did not look upon this same kaleidoscopic bit of tangled human life day after day, year in and year out, through all the laughing, weeping centuries that have sped since the poet was laid to sleep in his grave at Posilipo? That grave so rich in memories of

> *'The Etruscan three,*
> *Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,*
> *The bard of Prose, creative spirit! he*
> *Of the Hundred Tales of love.'*

For although it has been the fashion for the compilers of guide-books to throw a mist of doubt over it, there appears to be good evidence in favour of the remains of Virgil having really been deposited here. Baedeker seems unable to make up his mind on the point; for, having remarked that the 'genuineness is extremely questionable,' he immediately proceeds to state that 'probability and local tradition favour the assumption.' Everybody knows that the poet died at Brundusium, the modern Brindisi, in B.C. 19, and that he left express directions for his own interment at Posilipo, where he had composed, or at least revised, the 'Georgics' and a portion of the 'Æneid.' A hundred years later Statius the poet, a native of Neapolis, used to woo his muse in this quiet retreat, made

sacred by the memory of a great singer. 'At Virgil's honoured tomb,' he tells us, 'I sit and sing.' Afterwards Silius Italicus bought and restored the tomb, which for centuries was overshadowed by a bay-tree that withered and died, so says tradition, on September 14, 1321, the day on which, in far-off Ravenna, the first great light was quenched that had cleft its way through the darkness of the middle ages—the day when Dante Alighieri passed from the ranks of earthly singers, having gathered up the concentrated experiences of life into one deathless work, the quintessence of knowledge, of suffering, and of hope. Hither, too, came the love-sick Boccaccio to dream of his high-born Fiammetta; and here, as he himself tells us, under the shelter of the poet's grave, he fashioned the beauties of 'Filocopo,' his earliest love-tale. In 1341 Petrarch also, who was wont to sit here and dream of her whom he was so soon to lose, planted a second bay-tree in the soil which likely enough had been trodden thirteen centuries before by the feet of S. Paul. In connection with such a probability I had an amusing bit of experience. Many years ago I took a note of a hymn in use at Virgil's birthplace, in which commemoration was made of the apostle's visit to the poet's tomb. In the course of many travels my note was mislaid,

and, wishing to know the truth, I wrote the other day to the church authorities at Mantua asking for information. I received a courteous reply from the archdeacon, stating that 'non vi ha nessun cantico che ricordi la visita apostolica al sepolcro Virgiliano presso Posilipo,' but that such might 'perhaps' be found at Pozzuoli. Knowing that there was such a hymn in existence, since I had once possessed it, I followed up the trail, and to my inquiries at Pozzuoli received an answer from the reverend Canon de Fraja, informing me that they themselves had no commemoration of the apostolic visit, but that there was 'a sacred hymn preserved in the choral books of the cathedral *at Mantua*, and in use there'! My correspondent added a copy of the missing strophes, which run as follows:

'*Ad Maronis mausoleum*
Ductus fudit super eum
Piæ rorem lacrymæ.
Quem te, inquit, reddidissem,
Si te vivum invenissem,
Poetarum maxime!'*

* *When to Maro's tomb they brought him,*
Tender grief and pity wrought him
To bedew the stone with tears;
What a saint I might have crowned thee,
Had I only living found thee,
Poet first and without peers!

J. A. SYMONDS.

The tomb is entered by a long flight of steps leading up from a row of hammery blacksmiths' shops, and consists of a massive square chamber pierced with recesses for cinerary urns, among which it is impossible now to identify that of Virgil. But in Petrarch's time the actual urn containing the dust of the poet was still to be seen, in the centre of a group of small pillars, with a frieze bearing his own immortal epitaph:

'Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope: cecini pascua, rura, duces.'

Instead of this, which has disappeared, the inscription now runs:

'Qui cineres? tumuli hæc vestigia: conditur olim
Ille hic qui cecinit pascua, rura, duces.'

The ancient couplet has been recut on the outside, with the addition of:

'Ecce meos cineros [sic] *tumulantia saxa coronat*
Laurus rara solo vivida Pausilypi.
Si tumulus ruat æternum hic monumenta Maronis
Servarunt lauris lauriferi cineres.'

Above is a stupendous Latin inscription of some five hundred words, setting forth the omnipotent benefits of the twelve ancient *balnea* of Posilipo, which, like the famous Yankee pill, must have combined remedial virtues for the obliteration of every ill that flesh is heir to. For instance, the

fifth spring is extolled because 'mentem lætificat, gaudia fovet, tollit suspiria, venerem provocat, renes refigit, stomacho prodest, lœsis lumbis, vires jecoris reparat, corpus pinguefacit, febres erraticas exterminat,' etc. Fancy that all out of one hole! The next one is credited with the virtue of putting to flight 'nubila oculorum'; while without a phial of the seventh no family circle could be safe for an hour, inasmuch as 'petra frangit, caput a doloribus liberat, auditum auribus præstat et sonitum removet, cor lætificat, mentem format,' etc.

The entire hill of Posilipo, or in its Greek dress Pausilypon, is so called from the ancient villa of Vedius Pollio (of which the walls are still visible under a mantle of brushwood), who gave it a name the equivalent of 'Sans Souci,' because of the soothing effect of the beauty of its situation on the endurance of sorrow. Many other villas were once dotted about this

> '*Beata spiaggia*
> *Che di Virgilio e Sannazar nasconde*
> *Il cener sacro,*'

the said Sannazaro being a poetaster who was pleasing only in his close imitation of Virgil, and whose remains lie not far from those of his great model. The hill, something under 500 feet in

height, is pierced by a tunnel half a mile long lighted by gas, along the north side of which runs the steam-tram from Naples to Pozzuoli, with a paved footpath on the other, and a carriage-road in the centre. Overhead, on the summit of the hill, a vast number of new dwellings are in course of erection, for the accommodation of those whose homes are being demolished in the older parts of the city near the port, in order to make room for new streets and piazzas; a work which, at the expense of many millions of francs, will transform the city of the Siren into one of the first cities in Europe. At the west end of the tunnel we are whisked past the dusty village of Fuorigrotta, and in a few minutes are traversing the Campi Phlegræi, a region wholly given over to the eccentricities of nature, and desolated on every side by the 'veteris vestigia flammæ.' It was a tract in the time of Strabo 'surrounded by hills which seem to be on fire, having in many parts mouths emitting smoke, frequently accompanied by a terrible rumbling noise: the plain itself is full of drifted sulphur.'

Leaving the tram at Agnano, I bear away to the right, towards the low hollow Solfatara (Forum Vulcani), with its *fumaroli*, or vent-holes, to-day just what they were when Pliny called them 'spiracula Ditis,' breathing-places of Pluto. The

hill is roughly circular, hollowed out like a dish, with steep irregular sides of crumbling tufaceous, pumiceous, and trachytic rocks, from which subterranean echoes make answer to your footfall. In one place rises a column of aqueous vapour mixed with sulphuretted hydrogen, muriatic acid gas, and muriate of ammonia. Immediately around lies a tract known anciently as 'campi leucogæi,' from the whiteness of the saline soil. The whole hill is a ruined and degraded volcanic vent, the *fumaroli* of which forbid the supposition that its powers are extinct. A little way off is the Grotta del Cane, with its spring of carbonic acid, large quantities of which rise bubbling up through the water of the Lago d' Agnano, and have done so for the last two thousand years, seeing that the gas was made use of by the Cæsars. On the left, from the rising ground, is a pretty glimpse of the little volcanic island of Nisida close inshore, with its *bagno* and breakwater, famed, says Pliny, for its asparagus, 'quod in Neside Campaniæ insula nascitur longe optimum existimatur.' On the north side is the rock of Gaiola (probably a corruption of Gabbia, a birdcage), the 'felix Euplœa carinis' of Statius, where, in the days of old, mariners from the East were wont to offer sacrifices to the gods at the end of a successful voyage.

According to Lucan (Phars. vi. 90),

'Tali spiramine Nesis
Emittit Stygium nebulosis aera saxis,
Antraque letiferi rabiem Typhonis anhelant.'

Athenæus speaks of the island as inhabited by a few people and many rabbits. It was in Nesis that Brutus made his home after the assassination of Julius Cæsar. Here Cicero paid him a visit; and here Portia, wife of Brutus, heard the fatal tidings from Philippi. It was a favourite corner for the sportsmen of that day, being covered with dense wood, the 'silva quæ fixam pelago Nesida coronat' of Statius, who gives it no good name as a health resort:

'Inde malignum
Aera respirat pelago circumflua Nesis.'

Whether or not the island was given, as some think, by Constantine to the Neapolitan church of S. Restituta, it is certain that in the fifteenth century it belonged to that church, as appears from an inventory of 1485, in which mention is made of 'paludem Nisitæ cum nemore' as one of its possessions. In 1518 it passed into the hands of Giacomo Carafa, then to those of Pietro Orfanga, whose heirs sold it for 3,000 ducats to the doge of Amalfi, by whom the castle was built and the island turned into a scene of much revelling, as it

had been before by the dissipated Joanna the Catholic. Thirty years later it was sold for 10,500 ducats to Pietro Borgia, Prince of Scilla, he in his turn giving it up for 13,500 to the Neapolitans, who used the little haven of Pavone as a *lazzaretto*, or quarantine station, for Levantine vessels. At the beginning of the present century the population amounted to no more than thirty, and it is but little larger now.

Turning inland again, I nudge myself and try to realize that I am actually tramping through the borders of the 'lonely land and gloomy cells,' the 'atri janua Ditis,'

> '*Where dwell,*
> *Shrouded in mist and gloom continually,*
> *That people from sweet light secluded well,*
> *The dark Cimmerian tribes, who skirt the realms of hell.*'

I look nervously around for the darkened lake and the funereal cypress forest and the gibbering ghosts; but, though the atmosphere is heavy with sulphurous fumes, there is nothing of an uncanny nature to trouble or terrify me on this bright breezy day; and it is in rather a disenchanted frame of mind that I make my way down towards the old Cumæan port of Pozzuoli, the classical Dicæarchia or Puteoli, so called either from the wells or the smells, 'the whole district,' says Strabo,

'being full of stinking water, sulphur, fire, and hot springs. This city,' he adds, 'has become a place of extensive commerce, having artificial wharves, the construction of which was much facilitated by the easy nature of the sand, which contains much gypsum, and will cement and consolidate thoroughly.' Now Pozzuoli is famous for little but real odours and sham antiquities (manufactured in Naples), in both of which commodities a large business is done.

A few minutes more and I am paying my *lira* for admission to the grand old ruins of the amphitheatre, which in some respects excels those at Capua, Verona, and Pompeii, and in point of date is anterior to the Coliseum itself. Although less capacious as a whole than the first two named, the arena at Pozzuoli (in which the comedian Nero himself appeared as a gladiator) was of superior dimensions, as will be seen from the following table, in which the measurements are in English feet:

	OVER ALL.		ARENA.	
	LENGTH.	WIDTH.	LENGTH.	WIDTH.
Pozzuoli - -	446	358	369	216
Capua - - -	555	456	249	147
Verona - -	504	402	250	144
Pompeii - -	444	342	218	109
Rome - - -	620	513	287	180

The basement of the Pozzuoli building consists of a double series of vaults forming two elliptical

rings, in which every vault radiates from the centre of the arena. Between the rings a broad corridor, with fine evanescent curves, runs the whole way round the ellipse. The structure is in an excellent state of preservation. No doubt the grass-grown imperial 'box,' or *cubiculum*, was formerly more luxuriously furnished than it is now, but the underground arrangements for the show are to all intents and purposes as perfect as when they were first made. There are the wild-beast dens with sliding trap-doors, and the gladiators' rooms, and all the complicated contrivances for the *naumachia*, in which the arena was laid under water by means of conduits that would serve their use as well now as ever. The whole place is well cared for by intelligent and courteous officials, and I was loth to come up again to the blazing sunshine out of the cool subterranean corridors draped with maidenhair fern. In the main corridor, on the left of the principal entrance, one of the side chambers was fitted up in bygone times in honour of S. Januarius, bishop of Benevento, of whom a tablet records that when, in A.D. 305, he was thrown to the beasts in the arena by Diocletian, they found him such a tough customer that they left him in peace, instead of pieces, and he went his way unharmed.

Half a mile away is another relic of Pozzuoli's

departed greatness in the Serapeum, or temple of Jupiter Serapis, a spacious rectangular cloister surrounded by porticos, cells, and upwards of thirty lustral chambers standing round a circular temple in the centre, that once possessed what must have been a very stately peristyle of sixteen cipolline Corinthian pillars, most of which now stand in the theatre of the royal palace at Caserta, the Versailles of Naples. The whole plan of the building is manifestly adapted for Egyptian worship, and corresponds closely with that of the Tempio d' Iside at Pompeii, and the mighty Serapeon at Alexandria, of which Ruffinus has given us a description. The temple is well worth a visit on geological as well as antiquarian grounds, inasmuch as it offers us an interesting proof of the telluric changes that have taken place in the geological history of a region which at different periods has been subjected to clearly-defined elevations, as well as to less extensive but equally evident depressions. The area, 70 feet square, in which I am standing is seen at a glance to be on a level lower than that of the surrounding ground and house foundations. Upon it once stood many columns of *cipollino* (calcareous and lined with green serpentine), *rosso-antico*, and African brecciated marble. In the middle are the remains of a circular *cella*,

encircled once upon a time by eighteen *rosso-antico* columns, between which have been found inscriptions recording the addition of costly marbles by M. Aurelius. There are still standing erect three stately columns of Egyptian cipolline, of the kind known as 'ophicalcite,' calcareous with magnesian veins. When the building was unearthed one hundred and fifty years ago, these cipolline pillars were found to be encrusted at two different levels by still adherent matter, and for some 7 or 8 feet above the incrustation to be perforated by the lithodomus (*Mytilus lithophagus*), a species of boring shell still found alive in the Mediterranean. The question suggests itself, How did those pillars become perforated by a marine bivalve? The shafts, 42 feet high, rest on a floor 13 inches lower than the present mean high-water level of the sea; and from a height of 8 feet are perforated to more than 16 feet, the lower 8 feet immediately above the base showing a smooth, unpierced surface. I may mention that the level of the marble floor is in winter often under water to the depth of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

The simplest explanation is that the columns were bored at a time when they were on a lower level, and that temple and town and shore have since that period been all elevated. We may imagine that the floor was originally constructed

not 17 or 18 feet beneath the sea level, but nearly at its present one, and that there have been probably two depressions, with at least one re-elevation, leaving it, as we see it now, at pretty much its original height. I say 'depressions,' because no doubt the upper marble floor was added when the mosaic one failed any longer to answer its purpose. The conclusion to which Lyell, Phillips, Daubeny, and Breislak have all arrived is that a change in elevation of from 16 to 23 feet has taken place within the last sixteen centuries, the effect either of earth movements or convulsive shocks. I may add that in 1530 Loffredo, an Italian writer, spoke of the sea as then washing the base of the hills where now is the Starza, or broad tract to the west of the town, 20 feet above the sea.

These two ruins are the glory of Pozzuoli, which is otherwise a dull place nowadays. The church is handsome, and stands on the site of a temple of Augustus, the pillars of which may be seen near the entrance. In a locked chapel on the north side is the grave of Giambattista Pergolesi, of Jesi in the March, who died in 1736, aged twenty-six.

Some will find interest in the remembrance that Puteoli was once visited by the Apostle of the Gentiles, who stayed, or at least was 'desired to stay,' here seven days. His eyes must have looked

across the beautiful Bay of Baiæ, where now, instead of the good ship *Castor and Pollux*, a huge turret ship-of-war lies at anchor a few cables' length from the ruined buttresses or piers which, now called the Punta di Caligula, are all that is left of the 'moles Puteolanæ.' It was across this same bay that Caligula drove his chariot on a bridge of boats covered with earth, from which he flung a select party of his dearest friends into the sea, and arranged for their heads to be held under water by poles. But long ago this 'monster rather than a man,' who wanted to put his statue in the Holy of Holies, has given place to a yet more terrible creation in the person of the great Lord Armstrong, who, like Mercury, has stolen the tools of Vulcan, and has set up on the shore a cannon and armour plate foundry, whence comes booming over to my far-off lotos-garden the frequent roar of his noisy infants. Fancy a fifty-ton gun belching fire and smoke at the mouth of the Styx in the very shadow of the Forum Vulcani, and on the very sands across which the son of Alcmena erst drove his Iberian herd by the oyster-beds of the Lucrine lake, famous still for its succulent bivalves!

> '*Where into Acheron Cocytus glides,*
> *Streaming from Styx, and Pyriphlegethon.*'

Out beneath the exquisitely translucent water of

the bay, and round its curving shore, lie prone a hundred villas,* in which once lived and moved the best and worst of Rome—Cicero and Caligula, Cato, Hortensius (whom Plutarch calls a 'man of great dignity and politeness'—the orator who was the first Roman to roast a peacock, and who wept for the death of his favourite *muræna*), Sylla and Marius, Crassus, Pliny, the Agrippinas, Hadrian, Cato, and a thousand others, on account of whose foul deeds fair Baiæ wrung from the pen of Seneca her evil name of 'diversorium vitiorum,' a place where all restraint could be, and was, thrown aside. Now the water-worn Via Domitiana and the strand of the bay are strewn with broken columns and many fragments of rare and costly marble, rounded here and there into perfect spheres by the perpetual wash and play of the sea,

'Multæ per mare pessum
Subsedere, suis pariter cum civibus, urbes,'

as Lucretius hath it. Here were the Stufe di Nerone, natural mineral steam baths, the water of which (hot enough to boil an egg) was praised by Martial:

* It was no doubt in consequence of the unhealthy summer climate of these shores that the Romans used to build their villas in the sea—'jactæ in altum'—where, as any fisherman will tell you, they would be secure from the effects of malaria after sunset.

'Quid thermis melius Neronianis ?'

The actual heat of the escaping gases is 170 Fahr., and though there is an entire absence of accommodation, the springs are still visited for chronic cutaneous and joint diseases, gout, and rheumatism. Of such fame were they six centuries ago that three doctors arose in the might of their professional jealousy, and, sailing hither from Salerno, wrecked the entire hydropathic establishment in the dead of night, and while chuckling over their success, got into unexpected hot water themselves; for they were checkmated by Æolus, who, on the receipt of a telephone message from the outraged Pluto, upset and drowned them off the Punta di Campanella.

Near at hand, at the edge of the bay, rose the stately Academy of Cicero, with its far-famed portico, scene of the 'De Fato' dialogue, where he sought, but in vain, as he tells us, seclusion from the crowds who wanted to interview him. I wonder, did he leave Terentia at home? Almost adjoining it was the villa of Varro, recalling the 'Academia' and the 'De Finibus.' The great orator loved these shores as fondly as did Horace, whose testimonial is here and there stuck up along the front of the houses in Baiæ,

'Nullus in orbe sinus Baiis prælucet amœnis;'

with a various reading in one conspicuous instance of 'amonis.' There is a fascinating old-world charm still lingering about 'vaporiferæ Baiæ,' although the burial-place of Ulysses' friend is no longer the Brighton of dissolute Rome, the resort of the *fine fleur* of empire and republic, but looks very much 'down on its luck,' and decidedly changed for the worse since the bestial Hadrian died here, and Julia used to sit listening to Virgil reading his verses, and Martial sang hysterically,

> '*Ut mille laudem, Flacce, versibus Baias,*
> *Laudabo digna non satis tamen Baias,*'

and immortalized her

> '*Superbæ blanda dona naturæ,*'

and cursed the broiling dog-days:

> '*While near the Lucrine lake, consumed to death,*
> *I draw the sultry air and gasp for breath,*
> *Where streams of sulphur raise a stifling heat,*
> *And through the pores of the warm pumice sweat.*
> *Lo! now the sun to the bright Lion turns,*
> *And Baiæ with redoubled fury burns.*'*

It would indeed be difficult to find another space of earth of the same extent that is so identified, so saturated, with the poetry and mythology of the ancients as is the whole of this malarial tract lying between the tomb of Virgil and the Capo Miseno. The stranger is bewildered by its multitudinous

* Addison's translation.

associations. Here, between Baiæ and Bacoli, they show you the Sepolcro d'Agrippina, Nero's mother, the notorious wife of Claudius, whose noble statue is, as I have said, at Naples. The tomb is by no means the 'levis tumulus' of which Tacitus writes, but a long vaulted gallery, lined with paintings and stucco work, probably part of a theatre. Pleasant myths also are the temples of Mercury and Venus, the first standing half enveloped in vineyards, the other, a fine, lofty ruin, close to the road beyond the Hôtel de la Reine. On a very warm day I found the attempt to investigate the archæology of this district an exhausting work; and I came to the conclusion at last that the only rule to go by is in almost every instance to set aside the high-sounding names that have been scattered broadcast over every arch and wall and column. It is highly probable that most of the nomenclature had its origin in the first instance in the minds of enthusiastic Churchmen, who did not scruple to exercise their ingenuity, at the same time that they disguised their ignorance, by labelling the first ruin they came to (possibly a mere *trogolo*, as in the case of the temple of Mercury) with the name of the first deity they thought of. And the world at large complacently acquiesced in their pious frauds, until the dawn of an era of scepticism

that brought in a new system. Now, the idea was that, since the old Romans built their bath-houses in a circular form, every round ruin was a bath. One or two undoubted baths are, however, visible among the vines near the temple of Mercury; and the octagonal temple of Diana, described by Propertius, and bearing the words 'Diana lucifera,' may be taken as among the few remains in this locality which can be looked upon as being what they are represented to be.

Passing out of Baiæ along the shadeless road that leads under the fine old *castello* built by that best of Spanish viceroys, Don Pedro de Toledo, I halt for a few moments in the cool shadows of Bacoli, at the old Villa Bauli, where Nero hatched his mother's death; and then on across the strip of earth that now parts the Mare Morto from the old harbour of Misenum, of which it anciently formed the inner basin. On the left rises the curiously shaped tufa mass of the Capo Miseno, 300 feet high, with a mediæval tower and forlorn village, all that is left of the Portsmouth of imperial Rome—Misenum linked with the memory of the musical son of Æolus, whose body was here washed up by the waves, and buried on the hill,

'Qui nunc Misenus ab illo
Dicitur æternumque tenet per sæcula nomen.'

Here, according to the witching touch of a De Staël, dwelt Corinne, and in earlier times Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi; and here rose the wonderful bower that Lucullus built,

> '*Quæ monte summo posita Luculli manu*
> *Prospectat Siculum*,'

now but a waste of huge anise plants, that look like the ghosts of the epicure's kitchen-garden. The hero of a hundred battle-fields chose truly a site of bewitching beauty for his baths and terraced walks and statues and picture-gallery. Plutarch speaks a little disdainfully of him for thus squandering the wealth he had amassed in his many campaigns; but could he have put his money to a better use than he did in fashioning gardens that were 'numbered with those of kings, and the most magnificent even of those'? Among the wonders that stirred the admiration of mankind were the 'stately walls and galleries, the hothouses,' and the vast excavated reservoirs that made Tubero the Stoic call the Epicurean 'Xerxes in a toga.' But now not one stone is left upon another of all the gorgeous rooms in which his guests reclined on couches of purple velvet, and drank from jewelled cups, each worth a king's ransom: not a chip or fragment of the tables and pictures and statues 'gotten together out of all partes,' or the banquet-

ing-hall in which he gave to Pompey a supper that cost him 50,000 drachmas.* It may have been on just such an evening as this that, sitting down to supper by himself, Lucullus chided his servants for a meagre bill of fare. 'Did you not know that to-night Lucullus was to sup with Lucullus?' Within a bowshot stood the scarcely less magnificent villa of Pompey, in which, as he lay sick, he was visited by his physician, who bade his attendants procure a thrush for their master's jaded appetite. 'Alas!' said they, 'is it not the summer? and there are no thrushes to be had but in the gardens of Lucullus.' And the sick man only answered, 'Must Pompey then have died if Lucullus had not been an epicure?' From the windows of his villa he looked across the harbour of Misenum to the Elysian Fields, now covered with poplars and mulberries and festoons of vines: the 'campi Elisi' in which Martial drew a picture of 'the rough vinedresser bringing in the ripe grapes; the savage bulls bellowing in the deep valley; the crafty nets set for greedy thrushes; the long-haired children freed from the rule of their master.' I had his very words in my hand as I walked on along the shore towards Cumæ, followed, like the

* Or was it in the gorgeous 'Apollo' hall of his villa on the Pincian?

Pied Piper, by a noisy bevy of 'long-haired children,' to whom I taught the game of 'bob cherry' till the environs of Avernus rang again with their merry shouts. I make it a rule never to give to beggars in Italy, both on moral and monetary grounds; but here I was fairly overmastered, and when I had sat down on the shores of the (once) crystal Eridanus to cool my fevered brow, I dismissed them with a largesse of two-cent bits that, if laid out in the aggregate to the utmost advantage, could hardly suffice for the purchase of an ounce of sweetstuff. Then I walked on, lighter in heart as well as in pocket, for the sound of children's voices, albeit not so sweet as some I know, seemed to come in pleasant contrast with all around me, that spoke but of death and decay; and as I trudged along, and their chatter faded in the distance, I fell to wondering whether really all these places, so famed in song and story, were ever quite as beautiful as Virgil and Horace have painted them. Is it not a prerogative of genius to rise above the simple contemplation of Nature, to enrich her charms from the treasure-house of Fancy, and to adorn dull facts with the glittering ornaments of fiction? One thing, at any rate, is certain. A visit to the 'descensus Averni,' and the cave of the Sibyl, and the shores of the Styx,

in this present year of grace, is a dreadful 'let down' altogether. The river of hell is a pitiful ditch that a flea could ford; the unfathomable lake across whose

'Dread orifice
No bird unharmed might steer its flight'

is a contemptible lava-lined water-hole that an Australian dingo would think twice about before he drank of it; the Cimmerian forest,

'Where dwelt dead phantasms in a loveless land,'

a tangle of vines, with here and there a clump of rather scrubby chestnut-trees; the venerable lady's mystic cavern, the starting-point of Æneas for the shades, where once

'Spelunca alta fuit, vastoque immanis hiatu
Scrupea, tuta lacu nigro, nemorumque tenebris,'

is now but a dank and dismal tunnel in the tufa, highly suggestive of rheumatism—a shameless fraud, which, from the moment in which I first looked at it, has taken rank in my memory with those others of the Tarpeian rock and the tomb of Juliet and the Egerian fount.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ISLANDS OF PROCIDA AND ISCHIA.

'Inarimen Prochytenque legit sterilique locatas
Colle Pithecusas.'

OVID : Met., xiv. 89.

HAVING satiated my soul with the departed horrors of the malaria-stricken Littus Veneris, I strolled on for a mile and a half along the burning shore between the Mare Morto and the sea, under the steep soft cliffs of Monte Procida, looking anxiously for the ferry-boat which was to land me on the opposite shore of the island of Procida. But there was no sign of it, and all that I could learn from some fishermen was that I might find a chance craft farther along. So I went on till I came in sight of Cumæ, where died Tarquinius Superbus and Scipio, 'buried by the upbraiding shore.' A handful of cottages is all that now remains of the once wealthy Chalcidian city, the cradle of Italian civilization. Hereabouts it was

that the Sibyl uttered her prophecies ten centuries before the divine seer of Patmos penned the visions of the Apocalypse. Now Cumæ lies like a time-worn palimpsest, aglow with the memories of an old-world sanctity. She is beautiful rather by what she suggests than what she reveals, for Nature has long ago taken her back to her own bosom, and with each triumphant springtide weaves a fresh shroud of cyclamen and veronica. Luckily I soon hailed a couple of cheery fellows fishing inshore, who consented to put me across. Up came their nets in a twinkling, and away we sped to the tune of a dying *mistrale*, which made the pull to the queer old *marina* at Procida a heavy one.

The volcanic island of Procida, or Prochyta, is about five English miles in circuit, two in length, between no two points more than one mile in width, and nearly flat, notwithstanding Virgil calls it 'alta.' It gets its name either from the nurse of Æneas, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus thought, or from a word *prochua* in allusion to its separation from the neighbouring Ischia. 'Inarimes,' says Pliny, 'was a mountain, which being split asunder by an earthquake, made another island that, from being so rent, is called Prochua.' Others find its origin in 'Procima' or 'prima Cyme' (Cuma), but make no suggestion as to the change of letters.

In striking contrast with that of the shores and islands round it, the history of this morsel of rock is almost a blank page. It received in early times a colony of Eretrians and Chalcidians, who are reported to have worked precious metals here. So persistent, however, was the recurrence of earthquakes and fire eruptions from the craters (still plainly visible in the circular bays of the south side), that the Greeks soon deserted it, and it remained unoccupied till in B.C. 478 Hiero of Syracuse repeopled it: to which episode I am inclined to ascribe the origin of the myth of Typhœus. Subsequently it passed into the hands of Naples, after which for many centuries there are but the scantiest records even of its existence. With the marvellous fertility of the island fresh in my memory, it is curious to recall the testimony of Statius, who called it 'aspera et inculta,' and the yet more remarkable contempt of the satirist for its charms:

'*Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici*
Laudo tamen, vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ.
Janua Baiarum est, et gratum littus amœni
Secessus: ego vel Prochytam præpono Suburæ;
Nam quid tam miserum, tam solum vidimus, ut non
*Deterius credas, etc.**

* Juv., Sat. iii. 1.

In the Middle Ages it became the property of the family of Giovanni di Procida, the physician and friend of Frederic II. and Manfred; who, in 1279, moved by his country's wrongs at the hands of Martin IV. and Charles, took counsel with Michael Palæologus, and, disguised as a fisherman, roused the slumbering ire of his Ghibelline friends, and lighted the fire which three years later blazed forth in the massacre of the Sicilian Vespers. Upon the condemnation of the arch-conspirator the island was confiscated to the Crown, and in 1792 was declared a *città*.

My own experiences of Procida were meagre but melancholy. On landing, I tramped from one end of the *marina* to the other in quest of the 'unpretending inn near the landing-place,' of which Baedeker speaks; but I found it not. After a while I began a course of anxious inquiries, first of a *guardia municipale*, then of a postman, then a fisherman, another fisherman, a cobbler, a small boy, and an old woman, who promptly asked me for a *baiocco* for telling me, as all the others had done, that she knew naught of any such vain thing as a hostelry. When I say she gave this information, I must qualify the statement by the remark that during the one thousand minutes of my sojourn in the island, the whole of my communica-

tions with the inhabitants were carried on by pantomime. The mellifluous tongue of Alta Italia I soon found to be as useless as Chinese; what it was the people talked I knew then no more than I know now. I am not taking more than my share of traveller's license when I affirm that such an excellent and irreproachable Italian word as *albergo* was powerless to secure the faintest sign of recognition on their part. Such fiscal terms as *baiocco* and *macaroni* they comprehended readily, as I found out to my cost before I had left them,* but in other respects I to them and they to me were as sealed books. The postman (in spectacles) was cheerfully undemonstrative; the *guardia municipale*, with civil officialism, had the honour to acknowledge the receipt of my communication, and then made an end; the fisherman took a prolonged pull at his pipe, and gave me a three-volume look of blankest ignorance; the shoemaker, awl in hand, gave me nothing; the old woman called her daughter and mumbled something that sounded so like 'police' that I passed on, not wishing to stain my vagrant path with blood; while as for the small boy, he took a

* Travellers in Italy are familiar with the demand for a *macaroni* or a cigar or a *caffè*, as an equivalent for the *pourboire* and *trinkgeld* of regions farther north.

bewildered survey of the horizon, scratched himself, and turned away; then ran after me and held out his hand for tribute. How could I blame them when I bethought me of the many good folk at home who are clamorous to play the part of the good Samaritan, less the oil and the twopence?

By this time I was footsore and ravenous (having eaten nothing but cherries all day), and I resolved to walk up through the town with my eyes wide open, and turn into the first traveller's trap I could find. I might as well have looked for a Dryad in Regent's Park. On and on I walked up the one steep paved street, renewing my questionings of every likely-looking Procidan, but to no purpose, and with the feeling of humiliation burning itself into my very soul, that one who had just got nicely at home in the disguised Italian of Capri, and who could bend a Neapolitan cabman to his will by the lightest (or heaviest) word, should be now actually wandering empty and alone in search of the commonest necessaries of life among fourteen thousand isolated souls who knew no tongue but their own. With a ruffled spirit, I came after half an hour's walk upon a noisy troop of big lads playing skittles in a narrow lane, who, in dumb show, begged me to retrace my steps, seeing that

the track I was in led nowhither. But like the ass of Balaam, though with less profit, I asserted my own will, and was promptly and properly humbled by finding myself before long in a tortuous maze of vines and lemon groves from which there was no outlet. There was nothing for it but to turn back and run the gauntlet of that roistering troop again; and finally I found myself once more down at the Marina, as far as ever from the 'unpretending inn.' I began to think that there was, on the contrary, a good deal of pretence about it, and I was just inwardly debating whether I should buy a *rotola* of beans, and try to believe it was *table d'hôte*, and then after a smoke settle down for the night in a fishing-boat, when by a fortunate chance my eye fell upon a minute board on a corner house, with a hand pointing up the street, and the words 'Albergo e ristorante, Piazza dei Martiri 36.' I transcribe the address for the benefit of any tramps who may come after me. New life coursed through my veins; all thoughts of beans and boats and such pitiful makeshifts vanished in the glow of that magical inscription in good honest Italian; and with as light and airy a tread as I could get out of a pair of blistered feet, I mounted the street with the speed of 'black Auster' in quest of the *osteria*. In truth, it was

no wonder that I had missed the piazza before: enough that I found it now, and sure enough, a few yards beyond, up almost under the walls of the old castle, there stood out clean and clear in the twilight the signboard of the vine-covered Albergo dei Fiori.

I have observed in these parts that the outward attractiveness of an inn not seldom stands in inverse ratio to that of the interior. It is otherwise with the edifices dedicated to the purposes of spiritual refreshment. You pass through some hideous whitewashed portal into a church ablaze with gilding and paint and marble work; but the inns are but too often as whited sepulchres, fair to look upon, but full of all uncleanness. Happy the wayfarer if he chance upon one, as I did now, that is not a den of thieves. The *padrone* was all over the place after the supply of my wants in less than no time; and, after assuring me that the fat of the land was at my disposal, ushered me into a tiny lean-to, which merits a word of passing description. In that moment of beatitude I grasped but one fact. There stood a bed before my enraptured gaze, in a chamber that was in shape precisely like a slice or wedge of plum-cake cut from the centre to the circumference—a resemblance still more strikingly marked by the singular colouring of the

walls, which, white at the top, were covered for two-thirds of their height by a painted spotted dado, exactly like currant dough. At the thin end of the wedge, the only access to which lay through a hole in the floor, stood a bedstead, and at the broad end a balconied window opened on to a wealth of vines. The dressing-table, which drew a precarious support from the stair-rail, was a relic of the Chalcidian occupation, the looking-glass later, possibly Angevine; and as a suggestion for a washing-basin I had an extensively cracked Saracen jam-pot. Downstairs the kitchen arrangements were equally abreast of the times. In half an hour I was dining off *bric-à-brac*—my bill next morning called it *pranzo assorto*—on the veranda, *coram populo*, who found amusement in watching my struggles with dried tunny roe, fennel and eggs, a small and bitter fish, some exotic *provolone*, or buffalo milk cheese, and other culinary curios. I was in a mordant mood, and it was a case of *chi non risica non rosica* (he who risks not eats not). Strange to say, vegetables were conspicuous by their absence, notwithstanding the fact that this once barren rock is now the kitchen-garden of Naples, and reeks from end to end with green stuff. I thought, as I walked its ways, of the Parisian *hazard de la fourchette*, where the gamin

sticks a fork into a caldron of boiling hotch-potch, and brings out perhaps a calf's foot, or half a sheep's head, or a carrot, or—nothing; and I came to the conclusion that Procida has all the carrots. I have seen Guernsey tomatoes and Fiji bananas piled in heaps of many tons; but never have I seen such vast profusion of miscellaneous vegetables as in Procida. The long street is one huge Covent Garden, only 'more so.' Nine out of every ten yards are aglow (at least in the month of June) with masses (no smaller word will serve) of potatoes, beans (from the tiny *cicere*, which gave a nickname to Cicero, to the broadest of broads), peas, tomatoes, cucumbers, mallows, loquats, *molignani*, *peperoni*, cherries, strawberries, oranges, lemons, onions, and garlic galore.

Rising from the table with an appetite that a railway Bath bun alone could have staunched, I sought once more the slice of currant cake, where I found the bed in course of arrangement at the hands of my *fille de chambre*, in the guise of an old patriarch, with nothing particular on but a mosaic pair of pants that must have dated from more than one fall. He was a being of diminutive stature, made up chiefly, like a comb, of back and teeth, a vegetable skin, one gimlet eye, and a Slawkenbergian nose that weighs still on my

memory, and put me in mind of Shelley's experience of a similar organ that required the utmost stretch of Christian charity to forgive. To him succeeded the *padrone*, who, after laying a glass of *caffè nero* at my feet, and inquiring whether I wished to hire the bed only, or the whole room, disappeared through the trap-door, and to my horror, on reaching the bottom, turned the key in the lock and made me a prisoner. My first impulse was to scream, which I mastered; then I precipitated myself down the stairs, and rattled the door till the island trembled; but all to no purpose, for the folk were used to earth tremors, and my quarters were away from the rest of the house; so I went back like a naughty whipped child to my vine-clad balcony, which dominated an uninhabited leguminous expanse. Then I fell a-wondering why I was deprived of the power to go abroad. It could not be that mine host feared lest I should strip his room and flee in the dead of night laden with spoils. I could have as little use for such booty as the thief had for the Great Seal of England when he had stolen it from Lord Chancellor Thurlow. Should I make myself ridiculous by crying aloud and rousing the barbarians around me to a sense of my wrongs? I might spare myself the trouble, for no human

voice could make itself heard amid the deafening, dinning clang of the multitudinous bells from tower and steeple, which were now proclaiming the *venti-quattro* at the close of day. I am inclined to think that Procida is the best-belled place on earth, a paradise for the horny-handed son of toil who loveth strikes. From my window I counted fourteen churches peeping out among the vineyards, each church with about fourteen bells, and each bell, I should say, with fourteen clappers.

After awhile I grew calmer, and went to bed, or rather to board; for I soon found out that the exertions of my chamberman had not exceeded the spreading of the thinnest and prickliest of sheets upon the top of some unusually knotty timber. I speedily ascertained that the bed resembled that of Father Neptune, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts, bound on errands neither of love nor mercy. My only covering was a *serviette* of dimensions best described in the words of Talleyrand, 'Cela commence trop tard et finit trop tôt.' When I pulled it up over my shoulders my feet were bare; when they were covered I could but just discern the hither end in the region of my *patella*. Sleep was out of the question for a

man confined forcibly to his quarters within sight of Casamicciola, the scene of the biggest earthquake of modern times. If Mother Earth should grow restless during the night hours, I should probably form an exception to the survival of the fittest. I knew the best thing to do in such a case would be to rush and stand under the shelter of a doorway, which is a pretty safe means of escape if you can only do it in time. But doorway I had none, and I lay and pictured myself a couple of æons hence under glass in a museum, labelled 'Human remains from Procida, supposed not native.' Even if my mind had been at rest, the clocks alone would have kept my staring eyeballs fixed in inane despair upon the spotted sugary walls of my cell; for the hours and half-hours and quarters and half-quarters, were clanged forth with the most abandoned inaccuracy, no two clocks being within five minutes of each other, so that the result was an uninterrupted stream of cacophony in which none but a Poe could have found delight. I simply lay and quaked in torture; but, since even Quakers must sleep, after much tossing and getting up several times to rest, I slumbered till the first streak of dawn.

Then, just as the nearest clock, apparently under my pillow, had done striking nineteen, I heard

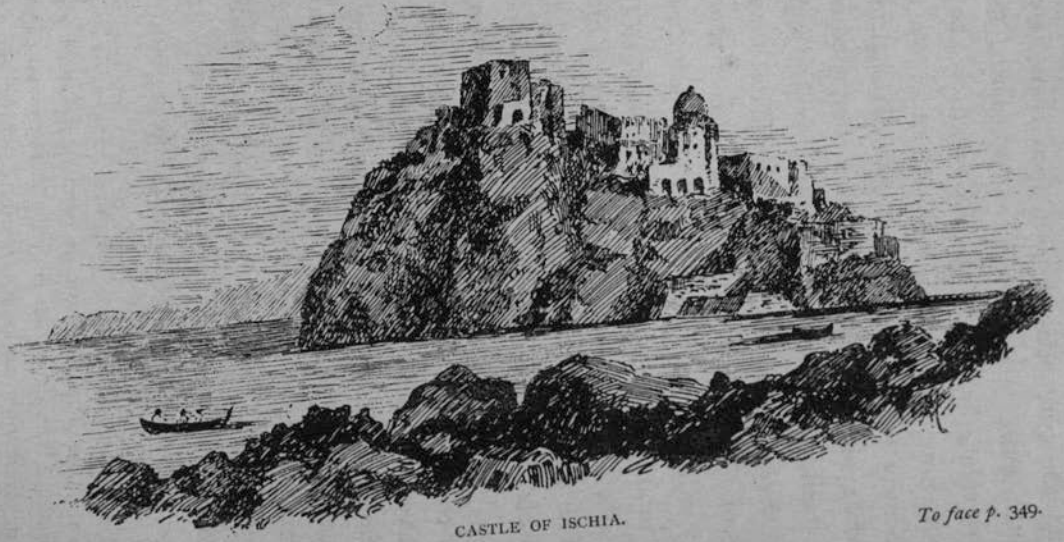
stealthy steps below; and quickly resolving to sell my life for something more than the 'sough o' an auld song,' I was (figuratively) disarmed by the appearance of my *padrone*, accompanied by a *guardia municipale*, in whose presence I felt resistance would be useless. I tried to appear unconcerned as he handed me a large book, in which he requested me (in pantomime) to inscribe my name and last place of residence, my *patria* and *condizione* and so forth. Determined that the world should have an opportunity of identifying me if it was to be that I must die, I hurriedly wrote myself down as 'Robinson Crusoe,' of the 'Villa Jovis,' whereupon the twain overwhelmed me with pantomimic thanks, and departed, once more locking the door. Then I rose and buried my nose in the jam-pot, and shook the dewdrops from my mane, and essayed to go forth. But my wily guardian had not only locked the door, but locked it *from the outside*, which was adding insult to injury, and escape seemed impossible. I waited placidly for some time, and then, as I was anxious to get across the island before the sun was high, I swore a solemn oath to be free. I tried to think of the daring feats of historical gaol-breakers, but, as is usual at such supreme moments, I could not remember one. I had a vague idea that a nail

from one's boot, or a hairpin, or a pickle-fork, would do the trick, but of these I was destitute. Suddenly I recalled the fact that as a British subject I was the possessor of a tooth-brush. In three minutes I was on the other side of that door, thanks to a certain masterly manipulation of that tooth-brush handle which I am not prepared lightly to divulge. Enough, I was free, and sound in limb, and would soon show these miscreant vegetarians a cleaner pair of heels than they were accustomed to. With a studied look of upbraiding, I sought the *padrone*, but he was nowhere to be found: only in his stead his handsome wife, who (a little staggered at first by my reappearance) affably consented to accept coin current for the cake and the *pranzo assorto*. I swallowed a cup of coffee and an egg that had barely missed being a chicken, gave two *soldi* to the gimlet-eyed one, and before I had gone fifty paces down the street ran into the arms of the *padrone*, with the key of my dungeon sticking shamelessly out of his waistcoat pocket. I felt it was no time for bandying words, and after a hasty *addio* and *buon viaggio* I left him with 'the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day,' and we parted, never, so far as I am concerned, to meet again. For I do not think I

shall go to Procida again—at least, not for the night.

The walk through the island is far from inviting, lying as it does between high stone walls; but the people are quiet and civil enough, and live a vegetable sort of life, and altogether are rather a pleasant relief from their volcanic neighbours on the mainland. The very dogs of Procida are a well-ordered class, and do not fly savagely at a stranger—possibly because they do not know how strange he is.

From the charming little circular bay of Chiajolello a dozen strong arms (with not more than fifty-five fingers—for you never get six Italians all with the normal number of unmaimed digits) pulled me across past the rock Vivara, once famed for pheasants, to the foot of the old castle of Ischia, esteemed in olden days as the strongest in Italy, and which Stanfield has so grandly painted. A few years after its erection by the Aragonese Alfonso I., Ferdinand the Catholic, with his wife Joanna, deserted by their hired *condottieri*, fled hither from the wrath of the Valois Charles VIII.; and, as is recorded on a marble slab still preserved, being at first refused admittance by the castellan Giusto della Candida, were allowed to enter unattended by any of their retinue. But no sooner



CASTLE OF ISCHIA.

To face p. 349.

had the gate been thrown open than Ferdinand, with more alacrity than good faith, ran the governor through with his sword. The castle rock, now tenanted by a colony of *coatti*, was in far-away times a stronghold of the Chalcidians,* and during the mediæval period comprised a town in itself, with fortress, cathedral, bishop's palace, and several churches. At a later date it was the site of a convent of nuns, whose place of sepulture may still be seen dug out in the inmost heart of the mountain, with the rows of mummified virginal remains all in a row in ghastly mockery of life.

The island of Ischia, known in mediæval times as Iscla, is a mass of lava and pumice-stone, in shape like a rough steep-sided pyramid, with the apex towards the east, measuring about four miles by five, and with a population of 26,000. To the ancients it was known under the names of Pithecusa, Ænaria and Inarimes. The commonly accepted derivation of the first of these is that given by Pliny, from *pithos*, a peculiar kind of clay vessel manufactured there—a large jar with a flattened base, in shape something like a gourd, of

* Cumani ab Chalcide Euboica originem trahunt: classe qua advecti ab domo fuerant, multum in ora maris ejus quod adcolunt potuere. Primo in insulas Ænariam et Pithecusas egressi, deinde in continentem ausi sedes transferre.—Livy viii. 22.

considerable thickness and strength, and with a wider mouth than an *amphora*. On a very early bas-relief found in Italy a *pithos* is depicted as the chosen retreat of Diogenes. Another origin of the word has been suggested by the story of Epimetheus, brother of Prometheus, who was banished hither by Zeus and turned into a monkey (*pithecos*). The name Ænaria stood for Ahenaria, 'ab aheno ærisque metallis,'* while in the 'Inarimes' of Ovid we may trace either the Homeric εἰν Ἀρίμοις, or an Etruscan word *arimi*, meaning apes.

When the world was young, Ischia was fabled to be the burial-place of Typhon, who lay pierced by the thunderbolts of Jove 'under the seagirt shores that press upon his shaggy breast,' and by his restless turnings caused 'flames and water to rush forth, and even small islands to rise containing springs of hot water;' † a myth that we find linked with volcanic agency not only here, as well as in Sicily and Asia Minor, but also in a more general form in the mythology of Egypt, in which Typhon, or Set, was the foe of Osiris, his brother.

The island has received many attentions, both

* Notwithstanding Livy's apparent distinction between the two names.

† Pindar, *Pyth. Od.*, i. 33; Æsch., *P. V.*, 363.

friendly and unfriendly, from the hands of man. In the days of Imperial Rome it was, as I have already mentioned, exchanged by Augustus for Capri. The list of those to whom its lofty rocky fastness has given shelter includes the names of Æneas, Marius, the wanton Julia, Ferdinand the Catholic and many other fugitive monarchs, as well as the widows of Matthæus Corvinus of Hungary and Galeazzo Visconti, and a host of despairing women. Hither came also the fair and noble Vittoria Colonna, Marchesa di Pescara, sung by Ariosto for her beauty and virtues, the beloved wife of one of the greatest soldiers in an age of great soldiers, and the idol of the greatest artist in an age of giants in art. She found in Ischia such consolation as brought her to the topmost pinnacle of fame as Italy's greatest poetess, and the earliest outpourings of her muse were dedicated to the memory of the gallant husband whose loss she mourned. Then the years went by, dulling the sharp edge of sorrow, and a new sun rose above the horizon of her life, in whose glowing beams she mounted on stronger pinions, and sang new strains of deathless love. In that time of fierce conflict and rending disruption, when ties of race and kindred were molten in the furnace heat of party strife, Vittoria stood forth as the reconciling angel of her house;

and though powerless to avert the struggle, she ministered to the healing of its wounds. Returning to Rome as a sister of mercy attached to the convent of San Silvestro in Capite, in 1536 she met Michelangelo Buonarroti, himself a maker of sonnets. Hers was the matchless face that he put into his Madonnas and into his 'Last Judgment.' As she lay dying, the artist, stricken with speechless grief, kneeled and kissed her hand in despairing homage; and when her spirit fled 'was quite beside himself, and as it were frenzied by sorrow; and,' adds his faithful pupil and biographer, 'I remember to have heard him say that nothing grieved him more than that when he saw her departed this life, he had not kissed her face also.'*

Like all its neighbours Ischia has suffered much at the hands of many. Greeks, Phœnicians, Syracusans, Romans, Saracens, Pisans, Spaniards, French, and English, have each and all done their best to worry it. The earliest Chalcidian settlement was probably at Lacco Ameno, on the north side; and Strabo tells us that the isle was 'inhabited by Eretrians and Chalcidians, who dwelt in great

* Condivi is responsible for this anecdote, but Vasari makes no mention of it, nor is it probable that there was any stronger link than that of Art between the Marchesa and her worshipper.

prosperity from the rich soil and gold mines; but they left the island, terrified by earthquakes and outbursts of fire and hot water. On this account a party of occupation, sent by Hiero, Tyrant of Syracuse, abandoned their fortifications and quitted the place.' After the fall of the Roman Empire, Ischia passed under the sceptre of the Byzantine rulers, and came in subsequently for its full share of annoyance at the hands of hungry Saracens, who on one occasion stayed three days; and having made havoc of the 'peculia Neapolitanorum non parva,' filled their galleots with 'men and necessaries,' and sailed away. In 1135 it was sacked by the men of Pisa; in the thirteenth century it sided with Frederic against Charles I.; and on being retaken in 1299 by the Angevines was reduced to a pitiable state. Nor was its condition much improved when, in 1425, the evil Joanna gave it to Alfonso I., who distinguished himself by building the castle, and in a less praiseworthy manner by driving all the men out of the island, and turning in a parcel of wild Spaniards, whom he compelled the women to take as husbands. A century later the enterprising Kheyreddin Barbarossa treated it much as he treated Capri, and sold 4,000 of the island folk into slavery. In 1734 a Bourbon squadron pounced upon it; and finally,

in 1810, after it had been held for a year by an Anglo-Sicilian expeditionary force, it fell into the hands of the Neapolitans.

These varied strokes of fortune sink into insignificance in comparison with the terrible natural convulsions of which this beautiful island has been again and again the victim. I had not walked a hundred yards from my boat before I found myself face to face with abundant evidence of the past volcanic disturbances of which we read in Pliny (H. N. ii. 88). In B.C. 500, 264 and 92, destructive eruptions of Monte Epomeo took place, as also in later times during the reigns of Titus, Antoninus Pius and Diocletian. Of the great eruption in B.C. 264, Timæus tells us that the mountain 'being shaken by an earthquake vomited forth fire, and the land between it and the coast was driven out into the sea; while the powdered soil, after being whirled on high, was poured down again on the island in a whirlwind; then the sea retired to a distance of three stadia, but afterwards returned and inundated the isle and extinguished the fire.' The giant has had no stomachic complaint since 1302, when he poured forth lava continuously for two months. The whole island abounds in magnetic iron, and is a conspicuous example of a great extinct volcanic cone of very

early date, of which the flanks are in many places pierced by active parasitic cones and fissures, whence there is a constant emission of gaseous vapours, affording a healthful outlet for the humours of the slumbering giant. The most important of the now extinct cones are Montecito (Pizzone), near Forio; Corbaro, which, according to Cigliani, has not erupted since B.C. 4000; Rotaro, B.C. 2600; Caccarelle, B.C. 350; and Cremato, the source of the last eruption in 1302. If it seems to be a daring speculation thus to label the various cones with dates, it must be remembered that their respective periods of activity may be at least approximately fixed by the soils: the earliest being light, sandy and crumbling; the later made up largely of *lapilli;* and the most recent consisting of basaltic and trachytic rock. Of these the date and origin are to some extent indicated by the chloridic and sulphuric *fumaroli*, with sublimates of various metals and metalloids. There is a pumiceous conglomerate corresponding with the *pozzolana* of the mainland, trachytes answering to the Solfatara rock, and lava at the Cap d'Arso identical with that of Vesuvius.

Ischia is under the patronage and protection of Santa Restituta, to whom the church at Lacco is dedicated, and whose basilica in Naples, adjoining

the more modern Duomo, served for centuries as the metropolitan cathedral. Among its decorations is a fresco by Giordano on the ceiling of the nave, representing the saint with a lily in her hand being carried ashore by angels at Ischia. She died the death of a virgin martyr in Egypt, and, like San Costanzo to Capri, floated hither and was landed, none the worse for her voyage, at the little bay of San Montano.

The whole island is one great thermal *établissement des bains*, as it has always been since the days when Statius praised its 'lacus medicos.' Twenty-two varieties of mineral water have been analyzed, all of which are alkali-saline and polymetallic, containing muriates, magnesia, lime, potash and free carbonic acid, with predominating elements of sulphate, carbonate and chloride of sodium. The varied virtues of the springs, the temperature of which ranges from 100 to 160 Fahrenheit, may be summed up in the strains of Dr. Dulcamara :

'Muove i paralitici,
Spedisce gli apopletici,
Gli asmatici, gli asfitici,
Gl' isterici, i diabetici:
Guarisce timpanitidi,
E scrofole e rachitidi,
E fin il mal di fegato
Che in moda diventò.'

Since the great earthquake of 1883 the island

has been almost deserted by the crowds of patients and pleasure-seekers who used to flock there. Before that catastrophe Casamicciola itself was a veritable beauty spot, with its white villas and *villettas* and *casini* dotted about among dark-green orange and lemon groves, woods of pine and chestnut, bowers of vine and vanilla, clambering roses, trailing convolvuli, and a hundred semi-tropical flowers. Even in its present desolated condition it is a lovely place. It was said by an Oriental, 'If all the world were a ring, Ormuz would be the gem:' 'for Ormuz,' says De Cicutiis, 'read Ischia.' While something may be excused to an Italian's pardonable pride, it is impossible even for the most travelled eye to rest without admiration upon the beautiful island that lies like a nymph reclining at the feet of Epomeo, watching through the long sunny hours the reflection of her own fair form in the glassy waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Alphonse de Lamartine has sung the fascination of Ischia in no exaggerated strains :

> '*Et nous aux penchants de ces verts Elysées,*
> *Sur les bords où l'amour eû caché son Eden,*
> *Au murmure plaintif des vagues apaisées,*
> *Aux rayons endormis de l'astre élyséèn,*
> *Sous le ciel où la vie, où le bonheur abonde,*
> *Sur ces rives que l'œil se plait à parcourir,*

Nous avons respiré cet air d'un autre monde :
Elise ! et cependant on dit qu'il faut mourir.'

The dire effects of the earthquake nine years ago are still abundantly visible as I look down from the terrace of the Hôtel Pithæcusa upon the ruined town that bore the full brunt of the shock. The little piazza by the mole is still bordered by grass-grown ruins; roofless houses, gaping to the sky, stand side by side with others roughly covered in with hideous corrugated iron; the hotels, with one or two exceptions, stand gashed and awry just as they were left by those few seconds of awful tremor. The monastery remains as Mother Earth left it when she ceased to shiver; but the huge hospital near the sea is being rebuilt in a very massive fashion. At the fishing village of Lacco Ameno less has been done even than at Casamicciola to make damages good. The place is a mere smudge, the only orderly looking object being the Eugénie institution, through the front door of which I catch sight of rows of girls plying busy fingers in the making of straw hats and baskets, a work at which deft and diligent hands can earn just three-halfpence a day. It would seem that the manufacture of hats with straw is only a shade more profitable than the making of bricks without.

As Pompeii had its warning sixteen years before it was overwhelmed, so was Casamicciola admonished of coming catastrophe by repeated shocks in 1881, by which damage was done to the amount of a million *lire* (£40,000). Then, two years and a half afterwards, at 8.30 a.m. on the 24th of July, 1883, a *rombo* like the growling of thunder was heard, followed by an earth-tremor. Two or three days of sultry weather passed, and at sundown on Saturday, the 28th, not a breath of air was stirring as the mantle of night fell softly on shore and sea. By half-past nine many of the island folk had gone indoors, while the visitors were sipping *gassosa* outside the cafés, or were gathered in the theatre to see Petito, a favourite Neapolitan actor, play Pulcinella. Not five minutes after the performance had begun an explosion was heard, followed by a violent undulatory shock, the extinguishing of the lights, and a fearsome creaking of the wooden building. Then came a swift panic, and a hideous struggle to get out into the open air. In *fifteen seconds* after that first earth-growl Casamicciola was a heap of ruins, underneath which lay thousands of dead and dying. After a few moments of silence, a thousand voices broke out in a wail of fear and agony. Scarcely a church, house, or hotel was left

standing. The hospital was hurled to the ground, burying nineteen children and three nurses; and a medley of ruined masonry was all that marked the place where a minute before had stood barracks, *municipio*, post-office, bishop's palace, and the church of Sant' Antonio.

Many strange scenes and incidents are told of that terrible night. At the moment of the first shock a gentleman in one of the hotels was playing to a room full of people, and had just begun Chopin's Funeral March in F minor, when an Italian marquis rose from his chair and said pettishly, 'I shall go into the garden; this English signor wants to bury us all.' Before he had stepped through the window darkness and destruction had fallen upon the whole company. The next morning, through the broken wall of the *salon*, the pictures could be seen still in their places, the furniture scarcely moved, the coffee cups on the table, the lamps still upright. In the music-room the pianoforte stood with strings hanging loose or snapped, and near it lay the body of the Englishman who had been playing. On the floor were strewn sheets of music, ladies' slippers, books, pictures, and among the litter lay the body of a man still holding an unopened packet of London newspapers. Sunday dawned

upon a scene of dismal desolation. Dead and dying were being laid out in rows in the piazza as fast as the firemen and *carabinieri* could drag them from the ruins. At one corner, rocking himself backwards and forwards, sat an elderly man who two years before lost his only son in the earthquake; now at his feet were lying the crushed bodies of his daughters, said to have been the most comely pair in the island. Near him a couple of *coatti* (convicts) had just laid down the little mangled body of the Duke of Calabritto's son. A few yards away a woman knelt by the side of her mother, her husband, and her three children, crooning softly a weird chant, and refusing to be comforted 'because they are not.' A *guardia* leads an old lame man to a blood-stained sheet in the shadowed angle of a wall, and, lifting the corner, shows him the only one left of his nine grandchildren. Through the shattered doors of the church of S. Rosario a stream of mutilated bodies is being borne continually and laid down in the cool shadows—every face, save one only, that of a young fair-haired woman, wearing a look of intense death agony. These and many other such details may be read in the Italian journals of the time, or heard to-day from the lips of those who were eye-witnesses of them. Whole families were

blotted out, so that, said one, it was easier to count the living than the dead.

Of marvellous escapes there were not a few. An Anglo-Indian judge was crushed, while his wife escaped by rushing to the shelter of a doorway. An Italian who was playing cards remembered the lights suddenly going out, but knew nothing more till he found himself prostrate among some prickly pears in the garden. Just as he was recovering his wits he heard a low cry, and, turning, saw through the darkness the glimmer of a woman's bare arm and jewelled hand. He tried to reach her, but at that moment the ground gave way and she disappeared. The wife of the inspector of forests at Chieti was reading when the room fell in and buried her all but one long tress of hair; she was found and rescued sixteen hours afterwards. Another lady was dug out unhurt on her bed, lying just as the shock had found her between her two little girls, both of whom were dead. An Englishwoman, at the moment after the shock, tied her baby between a couple of pillows and threw him from the window, herself escaping with a broken leg. There were many instances in which the power of the human body to sustain life was remarkably shown. A young Italian spent one hundred and ten hours

underground by the side of his father's corpse. A girl, saved by the frame of a mosquito-net, was found alive at the end of sixty hours. Ten children were rescued after thirty-six hours' imprisonment; a man eighty years old came back to life, like another Lazarus, to tell the tale of a four days' sojourn in the heart of the earth; a lad and an old woman lay unhurt under some ruins for five days. Others were less fortunate. Mons. Menella, the suffragan bishop, after a subterranean imprisonment for twenty-four hours, made his cries heard; but as the workers approached him his voice grew weaker, and when they reached him he was dead. The young Marchesa Laureati, a well-known Russian beauty, was overwhelmed, and her body never found; a poor wretch was pitched from a roof head foremost into a stream of hot mud, and there remained with his feet in the air. More humorous incidents were not lacking. A certain dame, for whose rescue a company of soldiers worked hard for several hours, at length held up her hand through the rubbish and cried triumphantly, 'Here! here! take the hen first!' An Italian *deputato* woke in such a fright that he rushed from the house with nothing on but a pair of slippers and holding a packet of candles in his hand. Perhaps the most grimly comical incident

was the discovery of an old man and his wife, who were found seated each on the top of a high wall a few yards apart, where they had been for some seventy hours unable either to descend or to aid one another. They were in a very feeble state when found, but quickly revived, and fell to wrangling as to how they got on to the walls. In the same street singular muffled cries were heard proceeding from the earth. Willing hands set to work, and after several hours' toil, during which the sounds grew fainter and fainter, the workers succeeded in unearthing the head and ears of an emaciated donkey, who expired, so to say, in the arms of his rescuers. A pig, when liberated after eight days' confinement, simply whisked its tail and, with a grunt of *grazie tante*, trotted off to take a mud bath. Its *pauca verba* were at least in better taste than the mutual malignings of the aged couple on the wall.

The two communes of Casamicciola and Lacco Ameno stand over a void upon a thin crust propped by immense supports of clay, which are subject to the constant action of thermal water, upon what is, in fact, a surface of clay, trachyte and tufa, resembling the cover of a huge caldron of water on the top of a fire. Of this caldron the wells are the safety-valves through which flows all

the steam generated by the springs. Close these valves, and the steam, directly it has gained the required force, shivers the lid and bursts it upwards. Under these circumstances, and so long as such conditions last, it is difficult to understand how the island can ever be a fit and proper dwelling-place for man. Rather is Ischia a Siren, whose witchery lures to death, and of whose deadly enchantments Arsène Houssage has sung with no less truth than beauty:

'*Cette brune princesse aux regards de colombe*
Appelant tout le monde à son rire joyeux,
Prenant les plus beaux airs, jouant des plus beaux yeux,
Prenez-y garde, amis, son corps est une tombe.

'*La passion mortelle, incessament y tombe,*
C'est l' abîme attirant les plus audacieux;
Elle immole les cœurs d'un doigt capricieux,
Si vous saviez quel gai sourire à l'hécatombe!

'*Amis, ne touchez pas à ce froid monument,*
Où dorment cent Amours dans leurs couches funèbres:
Vous n'auriez pas le temps de faire un testament.

'*N'est ce pas Ischia, cette fleur des ténèbres,*
Qui va jetant la mort sous le ciel des beaux jours,
Et vit sur son tombeau, souriante toujours?'

The ascent of Monte S. Michele, or Epomeo (2,878 feet), is said to repay those who are hardy enough to accomplish it. Before I arrived at years of discretion I ascended a good many small

mountains, but in later times have given up doing so, and have, moreover, acquired a certain contempt for amateur mountaineers, who are much given to prate when they come down from anything higher than a mole-hill, and are always ready to assure me that they have had the 'finest view in the world.' For my own part, I let them cackle, while in secret I hug to my soul the prime wisdom of at least two-thirds of the German adage, that one can best see a church from the outside, a tavern from within, and a mountain from the bottom.



CHAPEL OF SANT' ANTONIO, ANACAPRI: ISCHIA IN THE DISTANCE.

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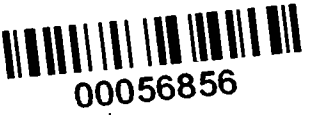
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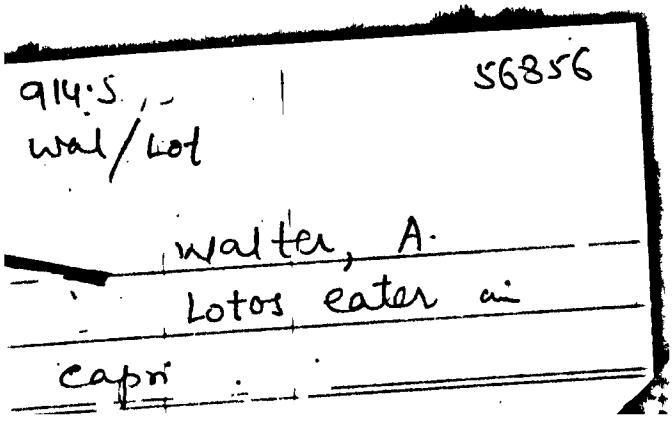
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